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Henna for Brides and Gazelles: Ritual, Women's Work, and Tourism in Morocco

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Résumé

Le henné, une teinture végétale semi-permanente, est utilisé à de nombreuses fins au Maroc, tout comme dans d'autres sociétés musulmanes. Le Hadith atteste l'usage du henné pour soulager la douleur arthritique et comme colorant utilisé par les hommes, pour teindre les cheveux et la barbe, et par les femmes, pour colorer leurs pieds et mains. Cette association du henné avec l'Islam a donné à cette plante une connotation religieuse. Cependant, l'utilisation rituelle du henné, particulièrement lors de mariages et de funérailles, tire ses racines d'une époque encore plus ancienne, suivant un modèle d'ocre rouge utilisé aux balbutiements de la société humaine. Les pratiques contemporaines de henné sont fortement associées aux cérémonies qui marquent les transitions calendriques et biologiques. Appliqué aux femmes qui se préparent au mariage ou à l'accouchement, destiné à la circoncision de l'enfant mâle et réintégré après le décès d'un époux, le henné indique (et illustre) le passage de personnes qui doivent surmonter des périodes difficiles – une signification qui a été facilement adaptée pour englober la liminalité physique et sociale qui accompagne les déplacements. Au cours des dernières années, les pratiques du henné ont acquis de la popularité, surtout depuis l'apparition d'artisans qui appliquent du henné pour les touristes locaux et étrangers dans les marchés publics. Des conflits, en particulier entre les artisans et la police, font ressortir l'importance socioéconomique de ce travail et la prégnance d'attitudes à manipuler la tradition pour gagner ou retenir le contrôle de l'argent gagné dans ce secteur à profits élevés. La présente étude, qui adopte une approche de biographie culturelle, rompt avec les évaluations touristiques axées sur les répercussions pour examiner comment la signification est intégrée à de nouveaux rites au moyen 1) d'un sondage sur les pratiques du henné qui détermine les caractéristiques générales et spécifiques aux collectivités marocaines musulmanes et juives; 2) de similarités et de contrastes entre les connaissances techniques et sociales des producteurs du secteur local et touristique contemporain liées à l'application du henné; et 3) d'un contexte social de production. Les données ont été recueillies durant l'observation de 15 artisans du henné du secteur local et de 30 artisans du secteur touristique réalisée pendant 18 mois au Maroc en 1998 et en 2000 et 2001. Les pratiques contemporaines sont mises en contraste avec les descriptions tirées de dossiers ethnographiques du 19e siècle et du début du 20e siècle, avec une attention particulière aux sources d'expression française.
[399 mots]

Mots-clés :
Henné, rites, tourisme local, tourisme international, secteur informel, marchandises, genre, travail, Maroc

Abstract

Henna, a semi-permanent vegetable dye, is used in many contexts in Morocco, as in other Muslim societies. The hadith document the use of henna to relieve arthritic pain, and as a dye used by men to color the hair and beard, and by women to stain their hands and feet. This association of henna with Islam gave the plant the stamp of religious orthodoxy. However, the ritual use of henna, notably its use at marriage and burial, has much earlier roots, following a pattern of red ochre use in very early human society. Contemporary henna practices are strongly associated with ceremonies that mark calendrical and life cycle transitions. Applied to women preparing for marriage or childbirth, awaiting a male child's circumcision, and re-entering the community after a spouse's death, henna indicates (and conveys) the passage of individuals through dangerous states – a meaning that has been easily adapted to encompass the physical and social liminality that accompanies travel. In recent years, henna practices have been increasingly commoditized, particularly with the appearance of artisans who apply henna for domestic and international tourists in public markets. Conflicts between artisans and police, in particular, highlight both the socio-economic importance of this work and the salience of manipulating tradition in gaining/retaining control of cash earned in this high profit sector. Employing a cultural biography approach, this study breaks with impact-oriented evaluations of tourism to examine how meaning is embedded in newly commoditized rituals through 1) a survey of henna practices that identifies general characteristics as well as those specific to Muslim and Jewish Moroccan communities; 2) similarities and contrasts between contemporary local and tourist sector producers' technical and social knowledge relating to henna application; and 3) the social context of production. Data was drawn from participant observation among 15 local and 30 tourist sector henna artisans carried out over 18 months of fieldwork in Morocco in 1998, and 2000-2001. Contemporary practices are contrasted with descriptions drawn from the nineteenth and early twentieth century ethnographic records, with particular attention to French sources.
[336 words]

Key words:
Henna, ritual, domestic tourism, international tourism, informal sector, commoditization, gender, work, Morocco

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Introduction: Tourism, development, and the commoditization of ritual

This is a study of the social context of art production. I examine change in a particular aspect of expressive culture as it has been integrated into the tourist sector, an arena that involved a different physical setting and different social relations than the existing (and customary) context of production. Widely shared social norms served to discourage customary producers from taking advantage of this new sector, and as self-taught producers took over and developed this new market, distinct aesthetic guidelines and rules governing the production/use of the art form emerged. However, the two products remained linked – not by shared techniques (which evolved to reflect the new context of production), or by common aesthetic standards (which shifted to accommodate the faster pace of production), but by a shared symbolic function that was recalled by the speech acts of the producers, and, most importantly, by the participation of local subjects as consumers in both markets. The participation of domestic tourists as consumers in this newly commoditized realm highlights the extent to which it has retained symbolic power, and, as I argue, gained additional significance through its incorporation into transnational exchanges that are located in the place of production.

The case study I have presented here is that of henna, which, in both its tourist and customary forms, is at once a ritual that directs passage from one state to another, and a commodity that has a knowable market value. Over the course of 18 months in a large Moroccan town that I call here S-Suuq l-Qdiim (a pseudonym), I learned about the technical, professional, ritual, and social aspects of henna work from individuals who had

become tourist sector artisans, as well as from area residents and local sector henna artisans. Throughout this work, I use the *local sector* and *tourist sector* as adjectives that refer to basic categories, such as local/tourist sector artisans, henna, and markets. These terms refer to the characteristic consumer base (local residents/domestic and international tourists) and forces of production, especially physical location (household/street), that characterize each category.

Henna for brides and gazelles

Henna is a semi-permanent vegetable dye that is applied to women's hands and feet on festive occasions. Dried, ground, and mixed with water and other ingredients, henna leaves have been used since antiquity in Asia and Africa as a hair, nail, and skin dye and as an ingredient in medicinal and magical preparations. Along with pigments and dyes such as madder and red ochre, henna has been used to produce blood-red color on fabric, skin, and other materials.[1]

The henna plant (*Lawsonia inermis*, syn. *Lawsonia alba*) is cultivated throughout North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.[2] It has small, bright green crenellated leaves carried on fine branches, and clusters of small, four-petaled white flowers. The flowers are sweetly scented, and can be pressed to produce a prized essential oil. In arid regions, it is shrub-like, reaching a height of 50-100 cm, though when unpruned it can reach much greater dimensions. *Lawsonia* is not present in uncultivated areas of Morocco, however, and is not considered native to the area.

Henna is a prominent aspect of female body adornment in Morocco. While the plant, its dried and ground leaves, and the paste made from it are called *hinna* (henna), the patterns applied to the skin are called *naqsh* (painting, inscription, engraving [Wehr,

1976]). Though henna is applied on many occasions and in many regions by a non-specialist family member, particularly the mother (Vonderheyden, 1934:47), this craft may also be performed (notably in urban areas) by a specialist called a *nqaasha*,[3] or in some regions, *hinnaya.* In fact, a list of merchants and artisans of the city of Marrakesh, published in 1925, mentioned the trade of hinnaya (Colin, 1931:233).[4]

The nqaasha has low status, although her work is not dishonorable. Traditionally, artisans visit their clients at home, and work in this private setting where they are served tea and sweets, and on many occasions, an entire meal. The local sector artisans' access to broad social networks and their capacity to influence the reputations of others as they carry information from one household to another give them considerable leverage in social relations.

While henna is applied on many occasions, this work addresses, in particular, the production of henna designs for female tourists, called *gazelles* in the contemporary slang of Moroccan tourism workers. Without clear data on the origin of the term, its derivation is suggested by similarities between the French/English forms and the Arabic noun from which they are derived. These forms (both "gazelle") refer to the animal, Cuvier's gazelle, that is indigenous to Morocco though now endangered. The animal's graceful appearance suggests the meaning attached to the Arabic form, *ghazala*, whose primary signification in contemporary Morocco is "beautiful." In this latter sense, it is frequently used to express aesthetic evaluations of many kinds. Extended to foreign women, this term has been perhaps mischievously mistranslated as gazelle, which is somewhat of a false cognate or *faux ami.* While, at one level, both unsuspecting (particularly female) tourists and endangered antelopes seem to be potential prey for hungry hunters, the term gazelle carries a definite connotation of belonging to an

international class of mobile consumers. This is evident in the coining of the term *gazelle marocaine* (fem.) for domestic tourists. Tourism workers and the Moroccan media alike have embraced the term with enthusiasm, creating the back formation *gazou* (male tourist), as well.

With the popularization in Western Europe and North America of "tribal" or "ethnic" body art practices (which include tattooing and piercing, in addition to henna), henna work has moved from the client's household into outdoor public areas where artisans offer rapidly executed designs to tourists. Carrying a blunt-needled syringe filled with henna paste, many wear a distinctive black face veil (*ngaab*) that, like their work kit, identifies them as tourist sector artisans. In S-Suuq l-Qdiim, these artisans are highly visible actors, as they approach virtually every male and female foreigner who enters the zone of highest tourist density. Although the work is not as finely detailed as that produced by artisans working in private homes, the market for tourist sector henna services is strong, and composed of both international and domestic tourists who pay premium prices.

While domestic tourists have the social resources (language skills and often family connections) that would allow them access to local sector artisans, an appreciable number of them choose to have henna done in public, by one of the tourist sector artisans. Henna application at tourist sites has been integrated into a category of activities whose use value is gauged in terms of processes of identification, indicating the prestige of domestic tourism as an avenue of consumption. Thus, while domestic tourists consistently bargain and pay prices that are at the low end of the scale (see Chapter 4), their numbers are so significant that about a quarter of the full-time henna artisans drew their customers primarily or exclusively from this group.

While the henna artisans earn high profits as tourist sector workers, many of them make regular payments to police officers or soldiers who patrol the area. Demands for payment are justified by an ideology (however tenuous) in which urban women are confined to the domestic sphere. This is operationalized in local government policy under which only "traditional" merchants and artisans are granted permits to operate in the area. Hence, the authenticity of the artisans' craft and behavior is a question that interests not only tourists looking for the backstage experience of authentic Moroccan culture (MacCannell, 1976), but also one that relates directly to the workers' capacity to retain control of their income.

Practices and meanings

Viewing tourism as a case study of many broad anthropological themes (economy, identity, expressive culture, and ritual), this research had several goals. Foremost among these was the analysis not just of the impact of tourism, but also of the participation in tourism work by marginal populations, in this case, tourist sector henna artisans. As data on domestic tourism emerged, this too became a prominent theme. Thus, in its attention to individual and collective action, this work responds to critiques that tourism studies have not viewed local participants as active players (Chambers, 1999; Stronza, 2001).[5] Amanda Stronza writes,

> Though the literature in the anthropology of tourism currently includes excellent descriptions of what can go wrong when tourism is introduced into local communities, the analysis so far has been strangely devoid of local voices. We have learned relatively little about how locals themselves perceive the arrays of pros and cons associated with tourism. Often our assumptions have been that locals were duped into accepting tourism rather than having consciously chosen such an option for themselves. (Stronza, 2001:269)

From its inception, the project was framed to highlight participants' roles, motivations, and strategies. In this regard, I asked, "How do low-income urban women in Morocco respond to the opportunities and challenges posed by international tourism?" In answering this question, I sought to 1) examine the impact of tourism on low-income urban women and families, especially relating to employment opportunities, social and other related costs, factors which promote women's capacity to benefit from tourism, and the use of income from women's employment; and 2) examine the structure of traditional and tourist-oriented henna industries, including acquisition of skills, acquisition and management of capital and supplies, marketing practices, competition and price setting (Chapter 4).

The research also addressed concerns arising from such diverse fields of the anthropological literature as expressive culture and tourism, and ritual and the body. How (and why) had the technique changed so much, and how did the change in technique and context affect the meaning of henna practices for Moroccan tourists, one of the primary markets? The elaboration of a theory of change in tourist art that incorporates social and cultural factors is an important contribution of this study. Many male merchants and tourism workers expressed criticism of these new henna practices. While this critique is phrased in terms of aesthetics, it is bound with an accompanying discourse that criticizes women's presence in the public sphere, and particularly their highly profitable business practices (Chapter 5). This criticism is not supported by the many gazelles marocaines, domestic female tourists who seek out the services of the henna artisans in their own expressions of their mobile identities. Through comparison with a variety of henna practices in the local society emerged my understanding of tourist

henna as a marker of the liminality of tourist experience that was as meaningful to Moroccan women as its customary role as a marker of liminality during life cycle rituals.

Methodology

Sites

Although this research was characterized by mobile subjects and fluid borders, the geographic and temporal scope can be clearly defined. The fieldwork was conducted between June 2000 and August 2001. Participant-observation was carried out at several locations in and around a plaza that was the central tourist site. After the research was underway, secondary sites were explored in two towns located a short distance from S-Suuq l-Qdiim where the tourist henna industry has emerged in a different fashion. These sites, outlying areas that were linked to its tourist trade by flows of workers and visitors (domestic and foreign), offered a productive comparison. Earlier visits to S-Suuq l-Qdiim and one of the secondary sites were carried out between June and August 1998.

Sample

Research participants were contacted through a non-random combination snowball-stratified sampling method. The snowball sample was multi-centered, deriving from a large number of initial contacts that produced additional contacts. Eventually, many of the contact networks linked up, as relationships between different individuals involved in the study became apparent over the course of my fieldwork.

This sampling strategy reflected the social organization of henna work, which divided women into small self-selected cooperative groups, as described in Chapter 4. Positive contact with one group member normally led to acceptance by other group members, and to links with additional groups that tended to work in the vicinity. As my

presence became established, some individuals sought me out in order to present their opinions and life stories,[6] while others volunteered to introduce me to members of their network who were involved in other aspects of the tourist economy. Several research assistants aided in locating and then introducing me to traditional sector artisans.

A number of potentially significant variables (age, marital status, household composition, education, ethnicity) established prior to the fieldwork were re-evaluated on several occasions to highlight data on emerging categories (male artisans, advanced language skills, advanced education, higher family status). Two secondary field sites were added for this reason, in order to provide an understanding of male artisans and middle class (female) artisans. Both of these categories are exceptional in the S-Suuq l-Qdiim sample but well-represented at the secondary locations, where the tourist oriented henna industry has appeared more recently.

Although infrequent participant-observation allowed me to have less intensive though long-term contact with many regular artisans, I carried out extensive discussions and frequent participant observation with more than 30 of the tourist sector artisans (including most of the long-term full-time workers). Formal and informal interviews and participant observation were carried out with a sample of 15 henna artisans from the traditional sector.

Statistical information on tourism employment was obtained through searches of the relevant literature, and through contacts initiated at a conference on tourism and development in Morocco. Male and female tourist sector workers in other trades (hotel and restaurant, retail, unlicensed tour guides, souvenir-producing artisans) as well as housewives and female and male workers outside the tourist sector were also included in my sample in order to establish a baseline of attitudes and practices. Individuals in this

category were mostly low-income earners, those who would be considered peers of the henna artisans in my primary sample. Also contacted were a number of middle to upper-middle class individuals associated with the tourism sector as licensed guides, police, civil servants, and proprietors and employees of stores, travel agencies, and restaurants. These individuals constituted the background against which the work of the henna artisans was cast.

Data collection

Preliminary contact with henna artisans in the tourist sector was established easily, since the artisans approached all male and female foreigners who entered the plaza. As women addressed me, asking if I was interested in a "henna tattoo," I responded in Moroccan Arabic, which aided in immediately establishing that I had a peculiar status for someone whose appearance clearly marked her as a foreigner.[7]

Each time, I expressed interest in their work, and explained that I was a student and wanted to learn about the kinds of ways women make money here. Over time, I gave more detailed explanations, describing how I wanted to understand the differences between doing henna for tourists and doing henna for weddings, and also what it is like for women to do business in the outdoor market. An incident recorded in my fieldnotes illustrates the processes through which my informants and I shared our beliefs about what my research was about:

> Khaddouj spent half an hour today telling me that on Judgement Day the infidels will go to hell. ... When I began to write notes for the morning, later, she asked me what I was writing. She said, Go and ask your teacher if it is true. She assumed that I was writing the important things, the facts about religion that she had been telling me as she worked. "Write this story down," she said. "When the Pharaoh died in the time of Moses, in the middle of the water that God had opened for Moses and his army to cross, when the Pharaoh died he left all the monuments and those are what the tourists visit in Egypt. Like the monuments here."

Their concern for the completion of my studies and the writing of my "book" was expressed every day. Just as I inquired about their families, the artisans inquired about my life. The age, health, and occupations of my parents were of interest to them, and when they learned that both parents were alive and healthy, and that my mother worked outside the home, they encouraged me to finish so that I could support my parents financially, as a good Moroccan daughter would. Many of the artisans, as we became more acquainted, asked me if I would go back to Canada and become a henna artisan. I would respond that I wanted to teach about the way that people live in Morocco. This was always accepted as a valid reason for my research, and often sparked questions and comments about relations between the West and the Arab countries. In this respect, the dramatic beginning of the second Palestinian intifada in October 2000 was noted by several of the artisans, who watched it on their televisions just as I did.

Sociability is highly valued in Morocco, and many of the henna artisans took for granted that I would be interested in sitting and talking with them, and encouraged me to visit frequently. Initial visits were short, not much longer than fifteen minutes or half an hour several times a day to different groups. By mid-September, however, I was staying for three to four hours at a time and felt that I had entered into their work-based networks as a participant, as the women questioned any significant absence. I began to bring fresh fruit from the market near my home, and during the hot months, I brought water, cooled in a porous earthenware jug. Cool water was not available in the street, and the cluster of women who came over to drink the water I brought from home demonstrated how large my network was growing. By the end of the hot season, the water I brought from home was emptied within 10 minutes of my arrival at the square. I

was also urged to share the provisions that others brought with them – stuffed fried sardines, fried eggplant, mashed potatoes with parsley, pepper, and lemon.

On the other hand, although I was welcome in the work-groups, I did not receive invitations to the henna artisan's homes the same way that I was constantly invited to visit middle-class people I met in other contexts. Male taxi drivers, dry goods merchants, hotel keepers, shop workers frequently asked me to meet their wives and families and join their social circles. One reason the women did not invite me to their homes was that during the high season they were almost constantly present in the square: many worked from nine in the morning until midnight, with a break of only an hour or so in mid-afternoon. Another reason was that my closest relationship was with a widowed woman who lived in a distant neighborhood with her son-in-law. With her daughter away on an extended visit to another city, my friend's situation was very precarious. Whether because I (as a foreigner) was a potential blemish to her reputation in the family, or because she felt that she could not invite a guest into the home because of her own status, she refrained for many months from inviting me further into her life.

As I expanded my network to include close relationships with women who were household heads themselves, I began to visit other women at their homes, though not without some tension between them and this woman, who had been my first enduring contact. As she heard increasingly that I was visiting others at their homes, she began to say that her son-in-law would invite me to their home the next time there was a circumcision, a specific date in the distant future. She also invited me to come along with her when she participated in other events, such as visiting the mosque (which I didn't do) and attending a circumcision party thrown by a friend (which I did).

Contact with traditional sector henna artisans was established through the social networks of research assistants and through inquiries in my growing network beyond the tourist sector artisans. Having established to my satisfaction that there is no cross-over between the two sectors, I asked people, both men and women, if they knew women who did henna for parties and weddings. In this way I was invited to social events, and carried out interviews with men and women about traditional henna practices and about their feelings and experiences related to tourism, and with local sector artisans about their careers and their home-life.

One difficulty that I encountered was managing contacts with members of different cooperative groups, as suggested above. Once my reputation was known, different circles sought to integrate me as wholly as possible into their networks. My choice to establish relationships with women of different groups appeared disloyal, and was challenged by those with whom I established my first close relationships. Anne Meneley (1996) describes similar difficulties in managing visiting patterns as she studied the politics of women's networks in Zabid, a small town in Yemen. Zabidi women, like Meneley herself, engaged in elaborate excuses in order to meet regular social obligations to close relations and friends while maximizing their opportunities to expand and improve their networks as opportunities arose.

In my case, chance meetings with some women while in the presence of their sworn enemies were difficult, as I would have to explain on the spot that I did, inconceivable as it seemed, visit the other too. In fact, I suspected that cliques were formed on some significant basis and I was reluctant to distance myself from groups or individuals that my first informants frequently described as degenerate (literally, "hippy-like"). Marginal to mainstream Moroccan society, these women seemed to experience, at

a higher level, the problems faced by the larger group whose tourist-sector activities pulled them out of traditional patterns of female behavior.

I persisted in spending time with different groups, though at different times of the day. I would greet each person that I knew, but tried not to leave one group and directly join another. Instead I devised a schedule of spending mornings with group A, afternoons and early evenings with group B, and late evenings with group C. Another area several minutes away from the plaza where most of the artisans worked provided an opportunity to set up another rotation with several more groups. Visits to different groups always ended by my return home or to a nearby café for a light meal and a rest during which I was able to write up brief notes. Returning to the site later, I would enter from a different street and join a group located in that area of the square.

Each visit began with the examination of my hands for traces of new or old henna designs that I would have to explain. Who did each one? Who retraced the lines? What quality was the henna dye? Was the design itself well-done? What kind of design was it? Did I pay for it? Although this eventually emerged as a performance which demonstrated the extent of my informants' knowledge and their skill in imparting it to me, initially these questions aimed to uncover my activities and especially the shape and size of my growing network. When the reaction to my answers told that I had spent a morning with a member of an unfriendly clique, I held my ground and refused to engage their criticisms or answer their questions about others' behaviors or news. After several months, most of the women seemed to have accepted most of the time that I was going to maintain a number of relationships.

Reliability of data: Observation, interviewing, and triangulation

As projected, observation was a useful tool, and yielded data that differs markedly from direct questioning. Direct questioning was useful to supplement or clarify my observations, yet did not replace daily routine participation. Direct questioning, as I anticipated, provided information that is most relevant to how people wish to be perceived, as well as their understanding of their interlocutor's expectations. For instance, in the early stages of the fieldwork, as I was trying to understand the actors and dynamics of the tourist arena, and particularly the role of the police, soldiers, and guards, research participants told me that there were no problems with the authorities, that they were there to make sure that there were no fights between the men. Not until law enforcement officials became accustomed to my presence, and eventually approached the henna women while I was sitting with them, did people's explanations of their role gain more detail and shift from normative explanations of the state's positive leadership role to more nuanced descriptions of interdependent relationships of exploitation incorporating henna artists, tourist police, national guard, and tourists, in which each actor seeks to maximize his/her take from the other. Relationships between police and henna artisans are described in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5.

I found direct questioning to be useful for eliciting information about henna techniques and traditions, as well as about attitudes toward tourism, women's work, and other topics in which my interest is in an initial appreciation of local norms. In each case, I tried to maintain an awareness of my interlocutor's role and the factors that shape his/her worldview. In most cases, I discussed the same questions with a number of others from similar and different statuses, hoping to triangulate data as well as to identify factors that are correlated with particular attitudes and experiences. A quote from my

fieldnotes illustrates early concerns with triangulating data, and with understanding the roles and statuses of my informants.

> Hmid looked at the pictures I got developed and said that he knew the man in one of them... [and described him as] "a bad guy." I said a *faux guide* ["hustler"]? Not really, he said, a drug dealer and a con artist. Hmid said that there are men who stay in the plaza all day, from 8 am to 1 am, and they are all bad types. What about the girls who are there, I asked. There are ones that are good, and ones that are bad, he said. Listen to them talk. He pointed at the picture of Mabrouka, and said that she does henna in her father's shop so that she doesn't get in trouble with the *Brigade Touristique* ["tourist police"]. I don't know who to believe: Hmid is probably interpreting what he sees in the picture. Laarbi said that her father is dead, and that she just appeared one day and began to sit with them. But Laarbi also said the shop was his, and it isn't. This reminds me of something someone said at Hassna's spice shop: how do you know who is telling the truth? Fellow said that one person did a long study on childcare, and people told her just anything. I told him that I was going to talk to lots of people, and also look and see what they do, so that I have data from different sources.

Languages: Translation and transliteration

Most interviews were conducted in the urban Moroccan Arabic that is typical of S-Suuq l-Qdiim.[8] Interviews with a number of people with post-secondary education were usually conducted in French, which continues to be the language of the bureaucracy, of higher instruction in many scientific and social science disciplines, and of many modern-sector businesses in Morocco. Two interviews with tourist sector workers were conducted in English, which is not widely spoken and hence provided a modicum of confidentiality in the presence of others in the workplace. On one occasion, when I suggested we speak in Moroccan Arabic instead, my interlocutor said, "No, I don't want them to understand."

My level of fluency in Moroccan Arabic was, during the time of my fieldwork, high intermediate. After several years of formal study at a Canadian university of Modern Standard Arabic and study (in Morocco with a private tutor) of Moroccan Arabic, I

could function in a variety of situations, and could communicate effectively, despite grammatical mistakes and the need for occasional circumlocution and clarification, with speakers who were not accustomed to dealing with non-native speakers. My adequate if imperfect grasp of Modern Standard Arabic was more than useful preparation for learning dialect – it demonstrated an approach that valued both immediate experience (participant observation) and preparation. My appreciation of the complex and arcane grammar of classical Arabic was always an ice-breaker in discussions with traditionally educated men.

In the diglossic (or polyglossic) model of hierarchically arranged high and low language varieties, Modern Standard Arabic (often referred to by the abbreviation MSA) is the prestigious high variety that is used in newspapers, radio and television news broadcasts, formal speeches, and high literature.[9] It is never used spontaneously in conversation, although some people may be able to converse fluently in it and use it in a modified form during the most formal discourse. Three men in my circle enjoyed an ability to speak easily in MSA, which they practiced in university classrooms and in religious study groups. Although television, film, and theatre in Morocco are increasingly using Moroccan Arabic, MSA continues to convey authority, and these new technologies are extending the reach of MSA beyond the physical walls of the mosque and the university. One of the MSA speakers said he learned it primarily from television.

Moroccan Arabic differs considerably from Modern Standard Arabic. Although there are significant family resemblances, Moroccan Arabic favors a different syntax (rigid subject-verb-object word order rather than MSA's verb-subject-object word order), and presents different verb conjugation patterns in past, present, and future tenses. Within the country there is also regional and local variation in verbs and pronouns from

MSA forms, and the female third-person plural pronoun and all dual pronoun forms are entirely absent. There are other lexical distinctions, including a large number of loanwords of Berber, French, and Spanish origin, and a wealth of semi-regular vowel transformations in words of Arabic origin. Additionally, Moroccan Arabic has several additional consonants and vowels not found in MSA, used frequently but not exclusively in words of non-Arabic origin.

Educated speakers in Morocco refer to classical Arabic as *fusha*, although most people in the neighborhood where I lived and worked referred to it simply as *'arabiyya* (Arabic). In contrast, Moroccan Arabic is called *lugha diyalna*, "our language," or *daarija,* and less commonly, *lugha daarija* ("popular language"). Although the speech of any particular individual is located on a continuum from 'arabiyya to daarija, the distinction between these two varieties, as epitomized by the two ends of the continuum, is clearly demarcated. The speech of the henna women and their families and friends is at the far end of the spectrum, with very little influence from standard Arabic.

Key to the concept of diglossia is the lack of prestige accorded to the lower, spoken language variety, and this is true in relation to the Modern Standard Arabic/Moroccan Arabic system as well. In this context, the efforts of anthropologists and others to use Moroccan Arabic in their texts reflect their level of attentiveness to the diverging narratives of text/mosque and practice/neighborhood. In this text, I acknowledge the primary role of what people said and did. Hence my transliteration does not represent the phonemes of Modern Standard Arabic, but favors instead local forms used by the people I was with. It presents a compromise between adhering to the standard representation of Modern Standard Arabic phonetics used by the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, one of the most prominent of several different transcription

schemes used today, and giving written expression to (and recognizing the authenticity and authority of) the voices of those who participated in my research. Long vowels are represented not by diacritical marks but by doubled letters, following the style used in the International Phonetic Alphabet.

Ethical considerations

Consent and anonymity

All participants were informed orally and frequently reminded of my intent to carry out and write up a research project, as well as their right to withdraw participation at any time. I also assured them that their identities would not be revealed. Consequently, names and identifying details have been altered.

Embodied consent

While some people — henna artisans and others — were eager to tell me what they thought were the major issues and themes of contemporary Moroccan society, others were reluctant to develop relationships that extended beyond a brief though friendly greeting. Latifa, a young henna artist, had agreed to talk to me about her work, although I was only once or twice been able to talk to her for more than several minutes before she said "Wakhkha, bisslama" [Okay, goodbye] and walked away. In the context of other women's habit of urging me to stay longer each time I suggested that I should go, I interpreted Latifa's behavior as a refusal of consent that overrode whatever verbal agreement she had given previously. In response to conflicting verbal and physical expressions, I adopted a culturally embedded understanding of consent that is continuously negotiated (rather than definitive) and diverse (incorporating physical as well as verbal communication). The expression of verbal consent, in this instance,

seemed to reflect the culturally shared notion of good manners and proper behavior (*adab*) rather than agreement to contribute to my project.

Compensation and reciprocity

I was concerned about the compensation of research participants for their time and contribution to the research. Direct payment (fee per interview) was rejected during the planning phase, since I worried that it would constitute coercive pressure to participate in the research, and would likely have a negative impact on the quality of the data. Initially, I had planned to offer copies of photographs of the artisans' work for their design albums, which were an essential and expensive part of their toolkit. Photographs are a significant but not extravagant expense, as development of 36 exposures costs about the equivalent of a chicken, a luxury that low-income families enjoyed occasionally. In fact, what was appreciated more than design pictures was copies of posed photographs that featured themselves, and their friends and family when possible.

Another valued and unproblematic avenue of reciprocity seemed to be the exchange of information and skills -- as the artisans taught me about their work, they also solicited information that I had about Western culture, languages, and behavior. Their information-gathering was part of a regular effort to refine and improve their business skills and strategies. This process is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

In the end, I found that it was expected that I would offer gifts on appropriate occasions, which included events such as my return from a visit to Canada; the celebration of engagements, weddings and circumcisions; the birth of children and grandchildren; the arrival of my husband on a visit from the United States; and initial visits to artisans' homes. In this way, I was integrated into the community at a level

appropriate to my diverse resources. My gifts were the subject of several discussions, as women sharply discouraged me from giving an amount that would embarrass close kin, who are expected to offer more. In fact, until I recognized this rule, my gift-giving caused inflation in the consumption levels of several households, as adult sons were shamed by their female kin into purchasing luxury food that was equivalent to the fruit and sweets I had brought.

Another important avenue of reciprocity was the hiring of household help. While only a few in my research community had skills that made them suitable research assistants, many people remarked that they knew a young woman or girl who would be a suitable maid. This, however, did not immediately appear to be related to reciprocity or diffuse compensation. In fact, I was initially reluctant to hire household help, and thought that it was essential to my position within the community to demonstrate that I was able to accomplish the daily tasks associated with running a household. My desire to learn local gender roles and "participate" in this way was encouraged by the comments of my female informants who often asked, "'Ajintii?" [Have you made bread?] I didn't.

I struggled to keep up. In order to keep my small apartment clean and cool, it was necessary to sweep and rinse the floors several times daily. Laundry was scrubbed and tumbled (by hand or foot) in a large basin filled with cold water. For several months, until I acquired a refrigerator (as well as a gas stove and oven), groceries had to be purchased before each meal. Eventually, several things occurred to me that caused me to change my mind and find paid domestic help. First, I realized that my living situation as the sole member of a household was very unusual. I had been aware early on of some of the implications of this situation, and knew from women's comments that being alone for any substantial length of time was thought unusual, unhealthy, and perhaps morally

suspect. I pleaded that my writing and studying kept me busy. However, over time, particularly as I saw the distribution of this reproductive labour among three or more adult women in many Moroccan households, I came to the conclusion that it was at most valiant, and even quite silly, perhaps, to try to do it all myself. The second important realization was that as a member of this neighborhood, I was expected to contribute to others' household survival strategies. As I learned about how low income women were interdependent with their wealthier neighbors in other parts of the city, I realized that my neighbors had these same expectations of me, and hired a woman (eventually several over the course of my fieldwork) to help me.

Risks to participants

I was concerned that the presence of a non-Moroccan researcher may have a significant impact on the behavior of both henna artisans and tourists. Tourists strongly desire to experience "authentic" moments, and I anticipated that their satisfaction with the artisans' work could be altered by the presence of a Canadian social scientist recording the event. Prior to the fieldwork, I anticipated that since my research would be conducted at a popular tourist site, it would be indistinguishable from the activities of many tourists. Furthermore, I hoped that by sitting with the older women and acquaintances of the artisans, I would not interfere with the work of intercepting tourist customers.

In the field, it became clear that the artisans did not wish me to move to the side when customers came. In fact, for some time, several of them made efforts to call me over so that I could watch them work and learn the skills of mixing and applying henna. Until I became accustomed to this, however, I continued to move to the background or even get up to go when they had a European customer, explaining to the artisan that

perhaps the customer didn't want to have me sitting there, and that I was worried that my presence would detract from their business. Very frequently, they objected. Hadda, who helped me understand how artisans skillfully manipulated the roles open to them, said, "No, it is my business, not the customer's. If I want you to go, I will tell you to go."

That my presence might bring increased attention from the police was a risk that became evident only after I gained greater familiarity with the context. My participation in this research was guided by the rule of thumb that my presence should not increase the risk encountered by the research subjects in the course of their daily activities. During periods of tension between the artisans and the police, which I discuss in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5, I avoided visiting the work groups, and turned my attention to other aspects of the research. The warmth with which I was greeted as I passed by the sites indicated when the period of tension was over and it was appropriate for me to rejoin the groups. Nonetheless, several artisans were not concerned by my presence during conflictual periods, and urged me to sit and see what was occurring. Discussions with them of these events helped me to later understand the multi-layered situation.

Method of analysis

Because so little research has focused on the social relations of tourism workers, and none at all on Muslim or Arab women working in tourism, I favored the inductive approach of grounded theory. The attention to directing research in the field that is the hallmark of grounded theory helped me to explore new suppositions that arose from the data, and to repeatedly ask myself about the content of what I considered relevant — what was significant, and hence data, and what was extraneous.

Grounded theory, a paradigm which views generating theory and doing social research as intertwined parts of a single process (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Miles and Huberman, 1994), provided the framework for an ongoing process of moving back and forth between data collection and analysis. The essence of grounded theory is that while the researcher approaches the field with a question and a loose framework of assumptions about likely variables and operating principles, theories and conclusions ideally emerge out of the data in an ongoing process of investigation, reflection, and comparison. Table 1 depicts some of the theories that were engaged during the research, and indicates how theories were tested through describing them in terms of observable data events.

I employed several note-taking techniques as I moved through this recursive process. Life histories were gathered in structured interviews, often tape-recorded or minutely noted during the interview itself. Less formal questioning was sometimes recorded at the site; however most times I returned home or went to a nearby café where I sat and wrote up notes after observation periods of several hours. Notes were initially taken in a mixture Moroccan Arabic, French, and English, and later transcribed to a computer file. Field drawings and sketches were used to map group behavior, to provide costume details, and to illustrate henna techniques. Photography was used (with the permission of subjects) to record both henna techniques and the physical setting.

Additional material was generated during the analysis of fieldnotes and images. Second and third readings produced additional questions, marginalia, underlined themes, and short texts that aimed to develop themes that were emerging from the data. During the later period of the fieldwork, after my first computer was replaced following an

electrical malfunction and the second one had a hard drive failure, I began to make these observations on audiotapes.

Table 1.1: Operationalization of key variables

Variable / Theoretical supposition	Observation keys
Commoditization / Henna artisans adapt traditional practice for a Western market primed by its own myths of Arab/Oriental exoticism.	1. Adaptation. Observation: Distinction between traditional and tourist henna practices. 2. Interaction with tourists. Observation: verbal and non-verbal communication (dress) between workers and tourists. Interview: norms relating to interaction with tourists. 3. Tourists' expectations. Observation and interviews: tourist motivations, expectations.
Marginality / Henna artisans are, like other culture brokers, marginal members of their communities. Marginality furnishes both motive and means for participation in tourist sector.	1. Ethnic marginality. Observation: links to Berber village (visits, exchange of goods), languages spoken. Interview: links to Berber village (affect). 2. Social marginality. Observation: daughter of single mother or widow, participation in visiting and cooperative networks. 3. Economic marginality. Observation: consumption levels (household inventory, visible consumption). Interview: consumption levels (e.g. engagement, wedding, and circumcision party narratives).
Rule-breaking / Henna artisans' activities in the tourist sector violate existing norms of acceptable female behavior.	1. Tourist sector activities. Observation, interview: verbal and non-verbal interaction with tourists and locals, organization of work. 2. Norms of female behavior: Observation, interview: behavior patterns of women of similar age, education, income level.
Integration / Henna artisans, like other low-income women, depend on a complex network of reciprocal help. Status within networks demonstrate extent that rule-breaking behavior is successfully integrated.	1. Network participation. Observation: participation in visiting and cooperative networks. Interview: network composition and exclusion rules. 2. Status. Observation: location within hierarchy of informant's vertical network, size of horizontal network, value of goods/services that can be mobilized by network. Interview: location of others within their respective networks.
Visibility / Elements of mobility and enclosure may be manipulated in order to diminish loss of status from tourist sector work.	1. Status. Observation: food sharing, socializing at worksite, visiting, level and form of participation in celebratory parties, comments about others. 2. Avoidance. Observation: behaviors that are practiced by artisans said to be low-status, and avoided by those said to be high-status. 3. Location and mobility. Observation: location and characteristics of worksite, degree and form of physical mobility while engaged in business.

Tourism, development, and gender

Located in the northwest corner of Africa, Morocco is less than an hour from Spain by ferry. Its borders are marked by Algeria to the east, Mauritania to the south,[10] the Atlantic Ocean on the west, the Mediterranean Sea on the north. This proximity to Europe is a major factor in the economy, which relies on both international tourism and migrant remittances. Both tourists and transiting migrants, however, are daily reminders that, while Morocco is one of the most developed African nations, the low exchange rate of the dirham excludes even middle class Moroccans from the forms of consumption that they see on television. (In 2000 and 2001, the Moroccan dirham was worth, on average, US$0.10.) In this regard, participation in activities marked as appropriate to international tourists takes on heightened significance, as many other forms of consumption associated with the televised global middle class that exists in Moroccans' cultural imaginary aren't accessible to them.

This research was conducted in a large urban community that served as a commercial, religious, and administrative center for surrounding rural areas. There is high concentration of income in the hands of a small elite.[11] Although economic opportunities are greater than in the nearby villages and countryside, unemployment is also very high. Nationally, unemployment was estimated at 23 percent in 1999.[12] The informal sector is vigorous, however, and absorbs much of the impact of chronically high unemployment (Salahdine, 1988).

The emergence of henna as a product/service offered in the tourist market reflects social and economic conditions that encourage Moroccan women in general to seek opportunities for cash income. It is also closely linked to the high visibility of the tourist sector as a profitable venue – and hence to government programs aimed at

promoting tourism as a target growth sector, as well as to the appearance of growing numbers of tourist facilities and, at a micro level, conspicuous consumption by international visitors. Running counter to these push factors are social and cultural factors, including the deeply held belief that family honor is linked to women's public comportment, which present a strong disincentive for most Moroccan women who consider tourist henna as a potential source of income.

The final part of this chapter offers a survey of the background against which the henna artisans made individual decisions about participation in the tourist market. I begin with an overview of society and economy in Morocco, and then show how tourism has emerged as a priority area for investment and growth. Through a survey of the literature on international tourism and development in the Third World, I introduce the question that is of particular concern to the artisans themselves: How can individuals with little capital and little formal education fashion opportunities to participate in the profits generated by international tourism? Just as men in the same social class enter the tourist market as unlicensed guides, some women present themselves as tourist sector henna artisans. The final section of this chapter addresses some of the obstacles they face.

Notes on Morocco

Like Algeria, Morocco is a hybrid society. Its indigenous population is Amazigh (often called Berber), and the languages and cultures of this group are maintained in many areas, despite official discouragement (see, for example, Crawford, 2001). This northern corner where Africa and Europe are closest has been repeatedly colonized: from 33 BC to the late 280s by Romans, in the fifth century AD by Vandals, and then, beginning in 705 by Arabs whose religious and cultural influence pervaded the country

but did not wipe out indigenous languages or traditions.[13] Muslim dynasties moved through Morocco into Spain, and held it until the fifteenth century; after their decline, Portuguese, Spanish, and eventually French armies pushed in return southward into Morocco.[14] Jews also settled in Morocco during the Roman Empire, and were joined by greater numbers as they fled the Inquisition.[15] Throughout this period, sub-Saharan Africans were brought north as slaves for armies and household labor (which persisted well into the 1930s). These successive population movements have influenced religious practice, language, food, architecture, and clothing.

Moroccan culture generally, both Amazigh and Arab, is strongly inflected by patriarchal gender relations that exist in tension with equally well-rooted patterns of feminine resistance. Notwithstanding predominantly nuclear residential patterns,[16] families (and, in some analyses, the state) continue to be organized around patrilineal kin units. [17] Yet it is important to underline that women's situation is modulated by factors such as family composition, income and class, and micro-local customs; the cases presented in this volume speak to the variety of women's experience in a single urban setting. Patriarchy is not total, nor do all women experience it in the same way.

As in other countries of North Africa, Moroccan women are marrying later in life: the average age at marriage increased from 17.3 in 1960 (Dittgen, 1996:37; Maroc, Ministère de la Statistique, 2001:14), to 25.8 in 1994, and increasing to 27.1 in 1997 (Ibid.:51). While some women choose to delay marriage because of personal reasons, my field interviews suggested that many young women had difficulty finding appropriate partners. The current structure of unemployment in Morocco is high, and unusually long-term, young, and skilled. In 2001, 35.5 percent of the urban young people (aged 15 to 24) were unemployed (Ibid.:71). In the same year, overall, 74 percent of unemployed

people had been without work for 12 months or longer, 35.4 percent of unemployed people were between the ages of 15 and 24, and 24 percent were well educated (having a baccalaureate, college, or university diploma)(Ibid.:20). Contrasting with high unemployment, the population is becoming more and more educated. Illiteracy among the population aged 10 and over has decreased from 87 percent at the time of independence to 75 percent in 1971, 65 percent in 1982, 55 percent in 1994, and 48 percent in 1998 (Ibid.:21). Among women, illiteracy has decreased from 67.4 percent in 1994 to 61.9 percent in 1998 (Ibid.:21). The increase in women's educational qualifications has not been met by increasing marital prospects. Women are marrying later, in part, because there are fewer marriage opportunities that promise a measurable increase in their standard of living.

Many women become heads of household at some point in their lives, usually after marriage dissolution following widowhood or divorce. The number of Moroccan households headed by women increased from 15.4 percent in 1994 to 18.6 percent in 2001 (Maroc, Ministère de la Statistique, 2001:55), with an average size that has remained steady at 3.9 persons (Ibid.:56). Most of these female heads of household are widows (59.1 percent in 1999), with smaller numbers of married (26.4 percent), divorced (10.3 percent), and single (4.2 percent) women (Ibid.:59).

While women can, in theory, rely on male kin for economic support, high unemployment means that in practice, women must support themselves and their dependents (Guerraoui, 2000). Yet they have few resources at their disposal. These female heads of household are women with little formal education; in 2001, 27.9 percent were classified as without education (*sans niveau*), while an additional 9.3 percent had basic (*fondamental*) education (Ibid.:57). The tourism industry, promoted by the Moroccan

government in poster campaigns, and visibly growing as more and more hotel complexes appear, is one potential arena in which these women can earn a living.[18] The present case study seeks to contribute to the development of our understanding of the diversity and complexity of Muslim Arab cultures.

Tourism and development

The development of an anthropological perspective on tourism followed the integration of postcolonial perspectives into the discipline.[19] One aspect of anthropology's self-critique of the 1960s and 1970s was increasingly greater attention to dynamic aspects of contemporary social life, including urbanization, immigration, globalization, and, eventually, tourism. In 1974, a conference on tourism was held conjointly with the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, which convened that year in Mexico City. Valene Smith's landmark book, *Hosts and Guests* (1977), emerged from that symposium.[20] Smith offered a generally accepted definition of a tourist (as reprised in the second edition): "a temporarily leisured person who voluntarily visits a place away from home for the purpose of experiencing a change" (Smith, 1989:1).

Since the early 1970s, when Davydd Greenwood called contemporary tourism the largest peacetime population movement in history (Greenwood, 1972:81), international tourism has grown from 160 million annual arrivals to 700 million arrivals in 2002.[21] In the Third World, tourism has centered around highly institutionalized resorts (lightly but quite accurately called "sun, sand, sex, and savings" tourism, see Crick, 1989) and to a lesser extent ethnic tourism, in which the cultural distinctions between tourists and residents are the focus of interest (see Van den Berghe, 1994). The tourism industry (including the specific and general infrastructure necessary for tourism,

as well as hotel, restaurant, sports, and entertainment complexes, Shaw and Williams, 2002:111) now dominates the economies and landscapes of many small nations. Larger ones as well, including Morocco, devote much effort and funds to increasing tourism capacity (Stafford et al, 1996).

Morocco's tourism strategy focuses on its diversity: pamphlets and poster campaigns depict the country's nearly 3500 kilometers of sandy Atlantic and Mediterranean coastline, its snow-capped High and Middle Atlas mountain ranges, the dunes of the northern edge of the Sahara Desert, and the gracious walls and religious architecture of the thousand-year old cities of Fez and Marrakesh.[22] Between 1993 and 1998, Morocco's tourism income increased an average of 4.7 percent yearly (Berrada, 2000:23). Despite this impressive growth, however, tourism is not an unproblematic development strategy.

International tourism is located within a global system marked by inequalities (between nation-states, and between classes and ethnic groups within nation-states) that emerged from a confluence of historical events and processes including mercantile colonialism. As European colonial regimes and military bases were withdrawn from much of the developing world, tourism operators moved in, taking advantage of the existing transportation, recreation, and supply networks (Oppermann, 1993).[23]

In the immediate post-colonial period, local populations often greeted initial phases of tourism with enthusiasm, hoping to find new markets for their products and labor (Butler, 1980), and treating tourists as high-status guests (e.g. Crystal, 1989).[24] Evoking imperial privilege and status, tourists from industrialized nations continue to benefit from favorable exchange rates, taking pleasure from the economic system established by the network of colonial empires (Nash, 1989).[25]

The rapid growth of tourism in the post-war period coincided with an attitude of export pessimism among development theorists who believed that the Third World could not generate surplus for growth through export sales in the highly competitive international market as the industrialized First World had in an earlier period (Brohman, 1996:49). Tourism was seen as an alternative solution. Calm and sunny beaches are rare commodities in the prosperous industrialized north, and resort-based tourism based on this comparative advantage appeared to be the solution to the economic underdevelopment of the Third World.[26]

In this view, tourism could provide the motor for the "take-off phase" of economic development (see Rostow, 1960), as foreign currency generated through tourism would allow cash-poor states to acquire the equipment and infrastructure necessary to transform their economies and catch up to the highly industrialized nations of the northern hemisphere. Supporters of tourism as a development strategy argue that tourists redistribute wealth from the north to the south, drawn not only by the natural resources of the south but also by terms of currency exchange that enable visitors from industrialized nations to experience leisure and luxury that are unaffordable to working class consumers in their daily lives.[27] Through displaced consumption, individuals acquire goods or services during business or pleasure trips, thus injecting a surplus that is produced in the place of residence. New money continues to circulate in the economy, creating a multiplier effect as individuals employed in the tourism industry spend their income in other sectors.

Yet, despite increases in national revenue, tourism has often failed as a development strategy. While, in Morocco, luxury hotels employ up to three times more staff per room than lower class hotels (Zakar, 1996:67), not all benefits are accrued

locally.[28] Strategies that focus on increasing luxury tourism, in particular, are associated with high levels of "leakage," by which we refer to the diversion of spending and profits as locally unavailable food, furnishings and equipment, supplies and even skilled workers are obtained internationally (Pearce, 1989). In a project to increase spending near the Pharoanic tombs in Luxor, for instance, more than half of the budget was spent on foreign materials and manpower. These funds were raised through a World Bank loan (Mitchell, 1995:9).

The economic impacts of tourism can be summarized as 1) the alteration of economic activities, including the increased demand for new skills, the creation of a class of middle-men or culture brokers, and shifts from other sectors, particularly agriculture (and unemployment, in the case of young people); and 2) the development of a dependent economy, dominated by large multinational tour operators, and characterized by inflation and dependence on imports (Runyan and Wu, 1979:452-453). Despite gains in specific areas (such as in national transportation and communication infrastructures) and for specific sectors of the population, tourism development has not exhibited a direct correspondence to general social and economic development (de Kadt, 1976; Nash, 1989; Oakes, 1998). Furthermore, in many instances, even carefully planned ecotourism has contributed to a rapid degradation of the landscape (Bandy, 1996).[29]

Nor does planning prevent the cyclic growth and decline of tourist areas over time, due to aging infrastructures, the emergence of new competing destinations, or political, economic, or social crises in the destination itself or in the principal sending countries (Butler, 1980).[30] Globally, the effect on tourism of brief and contained war is temporary, with recovery possible within six months (WTO, 2003b). For the large, globally-diversified hotel chains, this may be true.[31] At the local scale, however, and

particularly in Morocco's volatile sun-sand-and-sea resort market, violence has more long-term impacts as tour operators promote destinations that are perceived as more geographically and culturally distant from conflict.[32] The September 11 2001 airplane hijackings in the United States had a marked effect. In the January-October 2002 period, Morocco's tourism industry fell by 10 percent overall, with a decline of 26 percent in American arrivals compared to the same months of the previous year (Doggett, 2003). The Middle East overall experienced a decline of 11 percent in tourism arrivals in the September-December 2001 period (WTO, 2002).

During my time in the field, restaurant and small hotel owners vividly described the industry crisis that accompanied the first Gulf War in the early 1990s. While international tourist arrivals in Morocco declined 30 percent overall between 1990 and 1991, the Marrakesh Menara airport reported a decline of 58 percent (Stafford et al, 1996:119). While the war itself was 5000 kilometers away, there were local manifestations: the American presence in Saudi Arabia was publicly protested, culminating in an attack on a hotel in Fez (Stafford et al, 1996:83). During the same period, a French tourist of Algerian descent was murdered in a Marrakesh hotel. Western embassies sent messengers to hotels, one businessman told me, warning people to leave. Soon, the streets and sidewalks were filled with furniture and equipment, as tourist sector entrepreneurs gradually sold off their businesses piece by piece.

The growth of tourism in Third World nations has often entailed considerable upgrading of infrastructure, including airports, roads, water, sewage treatment, and electricity as well as international class hotels and attractions. While tourism's supporters claim that improvements in infrastructures benefit the local population as well, the organization of improvements is not geared to providing adequate service to the entire

population, but rather high (or luxurious) levels of service to a very restricted (non-national) population. In fact, the provision of water and electricity to hotel areas may result in periodic shutdowns in surrounding local residential neighborhoods. In 1975, the Hotel Ivoire was the largest electricity user in Ivory Coast (Van Houts, 1991:30). Similarly, while average per person water consumption in Tunisia is fifty litres per day, the average tourist consumes 500 litres daily; per person water consumption at the Dar Faiza luxury hotel is even higher at 1152 litres per day. The resulting water shortage has caused a decrease in citrus production, as much as 17 percent in one area of Tunisia (Van Houts, 1991:55-56).

The cultural impact of tourism is most striking where the gap between tourists' and residents' standards of living is high, and residents are not able to achieve gains in their standard of living as a result of tourism. Abdelwahab Bouhdiba wrote of the impact of French tourism in Tunisia in the 1970s,

> Tourism injects the behavior of a wasteful society in the midst of a society of want. What the average tourist consumes in Tunisia in a week in the way of meat, butter, dairy products, fruits, and pastries is equivalent to what two out of three Tunisians eat in an entire year. The rift between rich and poor societies at the point is no longer an academic issue but an everyday reality. (cited in de Kadt, 1976:67)

Despite criticism, optimistic views of tourism have persisted, allowing Tony Binns and Etienne Nel to write that "the advocacy of tourism as a so-called 'pro-poor' strategy is an emerging theme in development literature" (Binns and Nel, 2002:235). This argument is made forcefully by a Moroccan politician, tourism lobbyist, and hotel owner from Agadir, a southern province with many beach resorts:

> Tourism is one of the only profitable paths for Morocco, at the present time. It is the sector that is best able to carry the national economy, and can aid in resolving the unemployment problem. (in Alaoui, 2000:4, my translation)

Similarly, an Office National Marocain du Tourisme print advertisement from summer 2001 depicts a young Moroccan girl holding a large book. The accompanying banner text reads "A tourism of quality for a better future."

Increased tourism has directly prompted the establishment of hospitals in some areas to treat accidents and chronic illnesses suffered by tourists. While local populations may have access to these hospitals, the most urgent health needs in the most under-developed areas are preventive (de Kadt, 1976:45-46). Yet, tourist traffic has improved transportation in areas that are otherwise marginal to metropolitan interests. In Alaska, for instance, tourist traffic has resulted in the improvement of air service, including the reduction in freight costs which contribute significantly to food and consumer good prices (Smith, 1989b).

Writing of the impact of international tourism in Morocco, Stafford, Bélanger, and Sarrasin (1996:84) note the emergence of a 3-speed economy marked by growing disparity between the export sector, the local sector, and the subsistence sector. The subsistence sector, roughly analogous to the informal sector, has been described in terms of its easy accessibility, reliance on local resources, small (often family controlled) units, use of simple techniques acquired in the workplace, and lack of formal regulation by the state (Salahdine, 1988). While tourism provides many informal sector opportunities, including guiding and sales, these workers are often perceived as threats to formal sector businesses, and are characterized as a nuisance that harms the pleasant atmosphere necessary for tourism. In Morocco, special police units (known as Brigade Touristique) have been deployed particularly to monitor the informal sector that has sprung up in the tourism industry.

Women, men, and tourist sector employment

If tourism income tends to benefit international actors more than local ones in developing countries, it is also the case that the local actors who benefit most are male. One way this occurs is through the gendering of jobs, as individual positions and entire trades are identified predominantly or exclusively with gender roles.[33] Tourism jobs that incorporate tasks such as laundry and cleaning are filled by women in many societies, as has been documented for Tunisia (Smaoui, 1979) and Cyprus (Scott, 1997). In Morocco, many positions in the tourism industry (as elsewhere) are formally designated as male or female. Berrada (2000) provides job descriptions in the tourism industry that incorporate gender requirements in addition to necessary training and appropriate personality characteristics.

The assignment of reproductive labor to women coincides with lack of recognition and financial reward. In societies where women's most culturally affirmed roles are in the domestic sphere, as mother, wife, and housekeeper, their paid labor outside the household also tends to be less well remunerated than men's labor. And so, describing the context of female workers in the Philippines and Mexico, Sylvia Chant writes,

> The greater symbolic and actual attachment of women to domestic labor coupled with male primacy as breadwinners means that female employment is usually seen as a secondary activity by men and women alike, notwithstanding its often critical importance to household income. Women are generally situated in lower-paid and less prestigious jobs than their male counterparts, and, since they are viewed as working mainly to supplement their husbands' wages, they are also accorded low status and remuneration by employers. (Chant, 1997:128)

Indeed, in one reported case, the wages of female hotel workers in Tunisia were paid not to the workers, but to their fathers (Smaoui, 1976). In some cases, however, behaviors that reinforce traditional gender roles have provided benefits for women. For instance,

Cypriot women's practice of taking paying guests into their homes in allows them to retain control over their work and their incomes (Scott, 1997:61).

Access to tourism work is moderated by culturally specific beliefs about women's interaction with non-kin. Women's ability to work outside the home is closely related to "the division of labor in the moral economy represented by 'reputation'" (Scott, 1997:70). Although Moroccan women from upper income and educational backgrounds have entered the formal work force in large numbers, women from the poorest backgrounds shoulder a dual burden: the necessity to contribute to household income while maintaining the public morality necessary to maintain cooperative networks, an important aspect of poor households' survival strategies (March and Taqqu, 1986; Hoodfar, 1996, 1997). The capacity to manage these burdens is a focus of Chapter 4.

Job gendering reflects local beliefs about natural affinities and prohibitions, but also — importantly — the job's pay scale and its access to other opportunities to earn cash. Chant suggests that this might account for the predominance of male room service workers where prostitution is an important component of the tourist sector, while recognizing the equal possibility that sex tourism fosters attitudes toward women that make it difficult for women to provide personal service to male tourists in hotels without being perceived as potential sex partners (Chant, 1997:135). However, a positive consequence of gender designation of jobs is that these sectors often remain open to women, even when male jobs have declined, as in Puerto Vallarta in the 1990s (Chant, 1997:137). Male jobs typically decline as a tourist region reaches capacity level and new construction levels off.

Tourism and expressive culture

One of the initial concerns of those interested in the cultural changes promoted by the growth of tourism in developing countries is tourism's effects on locally craft traditions. As the change in Indonesian politics brought the potential for tourism in Bali in the early 1970s, for instance, those familiar with its rich material culture worried that it would be transformed into trinkets (Picard, 1995).

Through publicity campaigns that rely on images and prose to transform a geographical area into a desirable tourist destination, tour operators enlist craft traditions, cultural performances,[34] architectural traditions,[35] and other distinctive aspects of local culture to add essential value to other marketable products and services such as local hotels, restaurants, souvenirs (such as t-shirts printed with a typical image or place name), and transportation. These services and goods have no instrumental value to visitors except through association with valuable symbols of local culture (MacCannell, 1976; Urry, 1990; Boissevain, 1996). Drawing on the idea of commoditization as the incorporation of a service or good into the market system (Appadurai, 1986; Kopytoff, 1986), this process of association is described as cultural commoditization or commodification. Paraphrasing Cohen, Amanda Stronza writes,

> "Commodification of culture" has been used to describe a process by which things come to be evaluated in terms of their exchange value, in a context of trade, thereby becoming goods ... (Stronza, 2001:270)

Culture, like women in Western advertising, becomes part of the product, or the product itself (Marshment, 1997). Tourists themselves participate in this process through photography, "capturing" images that become, with the tourist's authorizing commentary, an (in)adequate summary of the lives of those visited, and a means of turning the trip into social capital.[36] The tourist's prestige in his or her own social circle is

derived from the experience of recognizable (and photographable) sites/sights (MacCannell, 1976).

Cultural commoditization presents difficulties to residents. Daily life may not — or no longer — reflect the cultural patterns that have been incorporated (and monumentalized) by tourism publicity. The exotic images created in Western culture become the model against which sights are measured, depriving residents of authority over the interpretation of their civilization (Fees, 1996). Local culture may even be managed and manipulated by external mediators, who seek to present a more authentic or picturesque tableau to tourists. Bruner and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett describe how the Anglo-Kenyan tourist attraction owner

> does not permit the Maasai to wear their digital watches, T-shirts, or football socks, and all radios, Walkmen, metal containers, plastics, aluminum cans, and mass-produced kitchen equipment must be locked away and hidden from tourist view. Jane supplies the red ochre and insists that the Maasai decorate their bodies and their hair, which morans [warriors] would do in any case, but to a standard that she helps set. (Bruner and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1994:457)

However, cattle, a key component of Maasai identity and economy, are excluded from the compound, because of the inconvenience they would pose to visitors. The pastoral Maasai have become waged actors in a carefully produced play.

Despite the primary role of local residents, through the commoditization of diffuse visual aspects of their culture (eg architectural patterns and historic or contemporary dress), residents can be excluded from the profit they generate for tour operators, the largest beneficiary in the system.[37] Lacking sufficient capital to participate on a larger scale, the unemployed respond to their exclusion through intense efforts to draw cash from the system through itinerant selling, "guiding," or other informal activities (Mitchell, 1995).

The commoditization and presentation of culture for tourists may also challenge the meaning attributed by local actors to objects, behaviors, and rituals. Erik Cohen argues that expressive culture (ritual, art) has both the divine and the local population as its intended audiences. The addition of tourists as a third audience does not necessarily strip the phenomenon of its capacity to address these intended audiences (Cohen, 1988).

In fact, cultural commoditization focuses residents' attention on their own history and traditions, and sometimes leads to conscious maintenance (or revalorization) of cultural patterns threatened by Western-style modernization (see for example, McKean, 1989; Swain, 1993). Regina Bendix argues, furthermore, that the economic benefits of cultural displays are secondary, not primary motivations as locals introduce and manipulate folklore demonstrations to enhance local identity (Bendix, 1989).[38] Individual artisans also develop, over time, satisfaction from the development of an aesthetic of creative expression (Jules-Rosette, 1984).

For the tourist, the souvenir constitutes not only a tangible and personal reminder of the vacation experience, but also a valuable status symbol that attests to their participation in this modern ritual (MacCannell, 1976). Some residents shift from existing economic activities into production for this new market, seeking to generate income from the influx of tourists.

The marketing of handicrafts produced to meet the desires of the tourist market generates effects in the metropolis, as the self-representations of tourist art merge into its discourse on ethnicity and identity. The export of ethnic art allows for the intercultural transfer of motifs and images without direct interaction (and correction), supporting the creation and maintenance of stereotypes (much like film and literature) but with the appearance of greater authenticity, given its origin (Graburn, 1984:394-395).

Processes of change in art and ritual

Outsiders, including anthropologists, have long viewed material culture as an emblem of ethnic identity (Adams, 1998:328). Change in art forms thus implies erosion of culture. In contrast, recent writers have adopted a dynamic perspective in which material culture is taken to be an arena in which identity is expressed and potentially reformulated (Appadurai, 1986; Gell, 1986; Adams, 1998).

The transformation of local production traditions often begins with tourists' desire to purchase examples of existing functional arts, forms which may themselves be products of earlier processes of acculturation (Graburn, 1984). Functional arts are fully embedded in the local society, intended for local consumption and reflecting local aesthetics. This demand spurs some residents to produce near-exact replicas for sale to tourists. The continued production of high quality replicas is supported by an educated and wealthy market that demands authenticity (see Spooner, 1986), an adequate supply of traditional materials, the maintenance of traditional aesthetics and social roles for artists, and the artists' ability to separate sacred and secular production (Graburn, 1984:399-400).

The embroidered *mola* blouse worn by Cuna women is a historically anchored functional art that has evolved toward tourist production (Graburn, 1984; Swain, 1989). The mola blouse was adopted by Cuna women after contact with missionaries who urged them to cover their torsos. Women began to apply colorful embroidery to the blouses, in increasingly complex designs that reflect succeeding styles in color and design. In the 1960s, used blouses sold to tourists generated increasing demand. Adopted by tour operators as a symbol of this pre-industrial society, images of the Cuna mola appeared worldwide. The integration of the mola into this new market did not result in

changes into the local aesthetic system, however. While some local women began to produce exclusively for sale to tourists, hasty and aesthetically unpleasing work was derided by the surrounding community.

The existence of a low-budget tourist market that does not demand quality or authenticity and the willingness of craftspeople to depart from existing practices favor the emergence of souvenir goods marked by innovation and inexpensive production techniques (de Kadt, 1976:68). Before the introduction of tourism, markets often exhibit little variation in the goods available for sale from one shop to the next, as most shopkeepers compete not in their wide selection, but in their prices, conditions of sale, or service. In contrast, markets catering to tourists must present variety and novelty in order to attract buyers whose interaction with sellers is likely to be brief, short-term, and hampered by linguistic and cultural barriers. Thus, goods produced for the tourist market are characterized by rapid evolution as new forms are introduced, popularized, and eclipsed by subsequent styles. There may also be a process of transformation, as new indigenous meanings are acquired, such as an object's transition from a functional role in a symbolic system or religious ritual to a sign of individual skill, membership in a community of artisans, and aesthetic attainment (de Kadt, 1976:70-71; Schädler, 1976).

Artisans respond to consumer demand, modifying their production to increase sales. Tunisian leather workers, for instance, have adapted the traditional camel muzzle for sale to tourists as a handbag, while Mexican artists have begun to manufacture bark paintings in the brighter colors they believe tourists prefer (de Kadt, 1976:68). New forms are also responsive to tourists' preconceived notions of what ought to be produced by the toured culture, resulting, for instance in the innovative production of black wood carvings by the Makonde, and feathered leather goods by the Cree (Graburn,

1984:400). Tourists' desire for "authentic" (often construed as "old") art has also prompted a boom in the artificial aging of new wares through a variety of techniques (eg Simpson, 1993). Similarly, the interest in Jewish ritual items by North American and European Jewish tourists in pre-1979 Iran created a profitable market for fake antiques with Hebrew motifs (Loeb, 1989).

The marketing of handicrafts produced to meet the desires of the tourist market generates effects in the metropolis, as the self-representations of tourist art merge into its discourse on ethnicity and identity. The export of ethnic art allows for the intercultural transfer of motifs and images without direct interaction (and correction), supporting the creation and maintenance of stereotypes (much like film and literature) but with the appearance of greater authenticity, given its origin (Graburn, 1984:394-395).

Tourism also touches ritual and performance. During early stages of tourist development in an area, the accommodation of explorer tourists requires little adjustment on the part of residents. As tourism enters later stages, and the area attracts organized tours, more institutionalized cultural tourism involves the organized viewing of rituals or performances. As rituals gain the interest of tour operators or local businesses as potential marketing vehicles for their products, tensions may arise. Examples drawn from the literature can help to illustrate the implications.

In his study of tourism in Fuenterrabia, a Basque town in Spain (Greenwood, 1972, 1989), Davydd Greenwood describes the impact of tourism on the Alarde. Fuenterrabia's Alarde, Greenwood tells us, is a festival which commemorates how the town withstood a lengthy siege in 1638, and was subsequently honored by the Spanish crown. The Alarde began with morning Mass, then costumed children from the town's different residential wards marched to the plaza playing military tunes on traditional

instruments. The mayor and town council led the parade on horseback, then mounted to the balcony of the town hall where they were applauded. They were saluted by contingents of young men armed with shotguns, who fired deafening salvos below the balcony of the town hall. After the performance, residents went to the fisherman's ward, the most picturesque and touristic area of the town, where they would eat and drink. The Alarde thus represented the collective affirmation of the community's unity (symbolically, against the French siege) despite the general atmosphere marked by class differences and distrust of the town leaders.

The Alarde took place during the tourist season, and was featured in the publicity materials that drew visitors to the town's beaches. In 1969, the local government, eager to attract more tourists, declared that the Alarde would be performed twice daily rather than once, so as to accommodate more onlookers. Although townspeople resisted and did not cooperate with the municipal government, the ritual subsequently lost meaning and interest for the local population who became reluctant to participate in what had been a vitally important event. The government's attempt to alter the festival so as to better accommodate tourists changed the nature of the Alarde from a ritual in which people expressed an important value (unity despite internal differences) into a mere show — one that could be put on as often as necessary to satisfy desires for amusement and profit. Though Fuenterrabia's Alarde later drew new meaning as a focus of the Basque separatist movement, Greenwood insists that tourism has the capacity to wrest meaning from the events it seems to celebrate. This position has been challenged from a number of perspectives.

One critical response has been offered by Jeremy Boissevain, who has suggested that tourism does not necessarily have a negative effect on cultural performance

(Boissevain, 1996).[39] Boissevain's fieldwork in the Maltese village of Naxxar revealed that the Our Lady of the Rosary and Corpus Christi processions, both village festivals (*festas*) associated with Roman Catholic celebrations, had declined along with the decreasing lay membership of the religious confraternities which traditionally organized them. The local clergy, whose community influence had declined and could no longer oblige local men to participate, was obliged to hire confraternity members from other villages to perform the liturgical procession, while Naxxar residents attended as onlookers and enjoyed the festive atmosphere. In contrast, the costumed Good Friday procession and the parades commemorating the community's patron saints grew in size and popularity with residents. When one parade grew significantly and was moved from a small street to a larger one, locals objected and organized another parade along the traditional route in defiance of town leaders.

While liturgical processions organized by the church — ceremonies marked by ritual — decreased in popularity during the 1970s, those marked by play — community-organized festivals incorporating bands and fireworks — increased. Yet only the liturgical processions were popular with tourists, who were absent from the wild play-focused community events. These events are staged and rehearsed spectacles, and onlookers were welcome, yet, as Boissevain writes, "outsiders just do not come. Maltese outsiders were uninterested. Tourists, who might well be interested, were simply not told about them by Maltese cultural commoditizers and guides. They assume tourists share their own disinterest in village back regions" (Boissevain, 1996:110).

Boissevain suggests that the festas promoted both identity and communitas: a demonstration of individuality through costuming and performing in a public event, an affirmation of neighborhood identity (segmentary solidarity in a Durkheimian sense) by

celebrating local symbols, an expression of village identity through enactment of community rituals for other Maltese, and a celebration of national Maltese identity through conscious display of its heritage for outsiders (Boissevain, 1996:116). The activities also comment on the social order, rejecting the traditional elite represented by the Church and town leaders, and momentarily recreating the close-knit social fabric weakened by increased social and geographic mobility.[40] Tourist interest increased the social prestige of the more secular festivals, as the town's elite recognized the festivals' interest for high status outsiders.

Tourists have also been attracted to the elaborate animist funerals celebrated in Tana Toraja, in Sulawesi province, Indonesia where Eric Crystal observed the impact of tourism (Crystal, 1989). Tana Toraja funerals, which took place months or years after the death, were occasions for demonstrating status and strengthening reciprocal relationships. Families honored the deceased with a splendid communal feast of pig and water buffalo, and welcomed contributions of animals to be sacrificed and then distributed to community members. Individuals incurred significant debts, even pawned irrigated rice land, in order to repay these obligations. Tourists who attended these funeral feasts participated in meals along with other community members, yet without assuming the obligation of reciprocity. Even though this represented a considerable cost to peasant families who consume meat rarely outside of their frequent funerals, villagers resisted selling tickets to tourists, and maintained that funerals must be open to anyone who wished to mourn. Residents were open to the attendance of tourists at their rituals as long as its fundamental structure of generous hospitality was not altered.

In a paper presented to the joint World Bank-Unesco seminar on the effects of tourism, Philip McKean describes how the Balinese have integrated the business of

tourism into a social system based on rules of hospitality and reciprocity. While tourists were expected to make donations to the temples and compounds they visit, this was often done surreptitiously on their behalf by the accompanying guide, whose fee included the cost of such donations. One guide told McKean,

> Now you find a donation in more and more places is expected. You have to expect this today, so be prepared. The foreigner need not know this. If you can avoid it, you should, to keep the image of Balinese being friendly and hospitable. You should pay the donation yourself, without the tourist noticing it (cited in de Kadt, 1976:57-58).

Both McKean (1989) and Michel Picard (1995) emphasize the ability of the Balinese to preserve authenticity by maintaining a distinction between commercial and spiritual ends. The maintenance of Balinese culture served the interests of both residents and tourists; with the advent of tourism, culture was transformed from "heritage" to be preserved, into "capital" to be exploited (Picard, 1995:55).

Consequent with change in technique and conditions of production is a concern for authenticity. Along with tourist consumers, bureaucrats are concerned with the authenticity of goods offered for sale. Karen Duffek has discussed criteria for establishing the authenticity of native art:

> the quality of the item, the ethnicity of the artist, the degree to which the item may be considered traditional, and the purpose for which the item was produced. (in Evans-Pritchard, 1987:291)

Referring in this case to the state's exclusion of non-aboriginal vendors from a privileged New Mexico marketplace, the designation of one class of individuals as capable of producing authentic goods finds a parallel in henna production for tourists, as we shall see in later chapters.

A final example further illuminates other factors that moderate the effect of tourism on cultural performances. Valene Smith has observed the development of

tourism in two Eskimo communities of northwest Alaska (Smith, 1989b). Influenced by missionaries, residents of Kotzebue had ceased to perform music and dances fifty years earlier. When tourists began to visit the town, however, tour operators organized performances which older residents also attended. The performances drew increasingly more Eskimo spectators, until onlookers were openly discouraged at the door. Finally, organizers imposed an entrance fee to exclude locals. Smith's research in Nome, where older community members were paid to dance by tour operators, found that dances organized for tourists were also attended by young people who participated of their own accord as community members. However, when the tour company failed to recognize all Eskimo (including young children) as equal participants, and refused to pay children who attended, the Eskimo stopped participating in the dances.

In both examples, residents attempted to negotiate favorable conditions for participating in dances that had been initiated by outsiders. The events, which celebrated aspects of their culture that had been abandoned following pressure from Whites, were absorbed into contemporary lifestyles as opportunities for socializing. Only when external organizers attempted to limit Eskimo participation to professional entertainers were the activities rejected by the communities.

A positive effect of the proliferation of cultural performances to cater to the tourism industry has been the redistribution of income from tour operators and tourists to local residents. In some cases, the demand for art and performance has attracted individuals who had not previously been engaged in this sector, or whose work as cultural performers represented a less significant part of their income. However, as more and more residents enter the market, prices drop. While the increased demand has stimulated local appreciation for traditions which were waning in favor of Western style

dance and entertainment (in the Seychelles, for example, see Wilson, 1976), the structuring of cultural performance to meet the needs of the tourist industry has raised concerns. Tourist presence in several settings did not, at least initially, alter their value for native participants of these rituals which had already institutionalized roles for onlookers, suggesting that the presence of tourists may not be destructive in itself, as long as tourism objectives do not conflict with the community values, structures, or rules. As in many instances, the loss of local control to outside tour operators produces resentment, which is expressed toward tourists (de Kadt, 1976:60).

Overview

The research presented here is organized in five chapters. Chapter 1, the introduction, has explored the research question, discussed methodological and ethical issues related to the research, and introduced fundamental questions relating to gender, culture, and tourism. Subsequent chapters further develop these themes. Chapter 2 presents a survey of the literature on henna ritual with emphasis on Morocco and neighboring Muslim societies. Chapter 3 contrasts tourist sector techniques with traditional sector practices, focusing on the links between social context and technical innovation. Chapter 4 presents the social context of women's work in the tourist sector, and draws on fieldwork data to show why women pursued activities that are strongly reproved. New forms of social organization emerged in the tourist sector, as artisans employed strategies that responded to acute and diffuse social pressures. Chapter 5 concludes with a discussion of henna adornment as a marker of liminality in Moroccan life cycle rituals, suggesting that the popularity of tourist sector henna among domestic

(Moroccan) tourists as well as international visitors indicates that changing technical and social aspects of production have not deprived this practice of meaning.

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[1] It is important to note that many red remnants and images are not associated with henna use. In Europe, red ochre was used c. 30,000 BC to color the head and trunk of corpses (Chenciner, 2000:29). Red ochre was used, in the past, as body paint by sub-Saharan Africans (brought north to Morocco as slaves (Bellakhdar, 1997:551). Chenciner also notes Sir James Frazer's observation on the frequency of creation myths in which humans are created out of red clay (Chenciner, 2000:284).

[2] An ethnographer writing in the early part of the twentieth century noted that Moroccan henna was of lower quality than that produced in Egypt, which provided much of the henna consumed by the North African market (Vonderheyden, 1934:37). Henna cultivated in the Touat [Twat] region of southern Morocco was exported, however, giving this region its popular name Twat l-Hinna.

[3] While the female form means henna artisan exclusively, the masculine form *naqqaash* means painter, house painter, artist, and sculptor (Wehr, 1976). While classical Arabic favors naqsh, many Moroccans use the diminutive form *nqiish* for henna. This distinction is coherent with the divergent meanings of naqqaash and naqqaasha, which demonstrate not just gender difference but also status.

[4] Along with hinnaya, female trades included in this list are *hargasa* (artisan who specializes in the application of hargos and 'aaker, black and red makeup), *khiyyata* (tailor who makes clothes for both women and men), *zraibiya* (carpet maker), *terraza* (embroiderer), *tershana* (embroiderer who specializes in *tershan*, passementerie decorations made from heavy cord), *'ayyata* (singer), *ghezzala* (spinner), *ghassala* (wool washer or corpse washer), *qaabla* (midwife), *gezzana* (fortune teller who uses pieces of coral in a basket), *loqqata* (olive picker), *mrammiya* (embroiderer who uses hand loom, *mramma*), and *nejjaja* (weaver). (Colin, 1931:231-240 passim)

[5] An early exception to the trend of impact-driven studies was Bennetta Jules-Rosette's work on African carvers who produced for the tourist market. Her study attempted to redress what she saw as an over-emphasis on tourists' consumption (particularly of images) and a lack of attention to the creation of these images (Jules-Rosette, 1984:3).

[6] In her ethnography of a Hmong immigrant community in Wisconsin, Jo Ann Koltyk (1996) mentions a similar instance of being summoned to interview the members of a household.

[7] In fact, with blue eyes, fair and freckled skin, and light brown hair, I look much like local women in the northwest where many Moroccans have a typically Celtic appearance. In the town where I did my fieldwork, however, blue eyes and fair hair were very uncommon. Furthermore, except when attending parties or going to or from the hammam, I dressed in modest Western clothing, which I found enabled me to accomplish my daily tasks with the least curiosity from male strangers. I did have several jellabas, however, and wore them occasionally to the delight and sometimes amusement of the women I visited. Their comments on my dress were instructive, and enabled me to appreciate the initially invisible (to me) details that make any jellaba up-to-date, distinctive, and stylish or plain and frumpy. Headscarves are similarly complex in the meanings they communicate. One style that I enjoyed wearing (for convenience, though I also found it charming) was a simple white scarf decorated with blue threads and tassels that is worn turban-style by women when returning from the hammam and when engaging in housework. Folded diagonally in half, this scarf is tied around the head, with the tassels arranged at the crown and the neck exposed. It is worn in the street particularly by young maids. When I wore this in a neighborhood other than my own I had a palpable sense of being invisible, something that was rare for me during the period of my fieldwork.

[8] Moroccans speak a combination of Berber, Moroccan Arabic, Modern Standard Arabic, Classical Arabic, and French, depending primarily on education and, to a lesser extent, on occupation. See Youssi, 1989, for a full description of Morocco's linguistic situation.

[9] Modern Standard Arabic is distinguished from Classical Arabic by a markedly reduced vocabulary, a high proportion of neologisms, and by the reduction of final vowels in the spoken form. Modern Standard Arabic and Classical Arabic, however, share a common grammar and much vocabulary, allowing the educated modern reader to read and understand texts, including the Qur'an, that are many centuries old. The selective use of words and phrases found in Classical texts but not in MSA is a favored strategy for modern writers and speakers to demonstrate their erudition or their familiarity with religious texts.

[10] The Spanish government ceded the Spanish Sahara, the southern territory that borders Mauritania, to Morocco in 1976. The administration of this area is disputed by the Polisario. The Moroccan government holds elections, provides services, and stations soldiers in the territory, which appears as part of Morocco on many maps. A cease-fire has been in effect since 1991.

[11] The Gini index is the most commonly used measure of the degree of inequality within and between states (Xu, 2000). Lower numbers indicate greater income equality, while higher numbers indicate greater income inequality. Morocco's Gini index, which measures the distribution of family income, is 45. Neighboring Algeria's Gini index is 35, Mauritania's is 37, and Egypt's is 29. Canada's Gini index is 32. All figures are from the CIA World Factbook 2002, which is prepared for the use of US government agencies, and available online at http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/fields /2172.html.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Roman and Vandal occupation contributed to the early spread of Christianity in North Africa (see Raven, 1969; Mahjoubi and Salama, 1981). The pre-Islamic history of Morocco, including the Berber dynasty that preceded Roman rule, is rarely considered, largely owing to the rapid and profound social shift that accompanied the Arab invasion (Siraj, 1995). Nonetheless, it should not be discounted. Many urban areas, including seventh-century Volubilis (in central Morocco) were largely Christian; archaeological evidence suggests the influence of these outposts was weak, and periodically attacked by indigenous Berbers (Mahjoubi and Salama, 1981:508-509). However, the influence of the region's pre-Islamic civilization can be found in the high rate of correspondence between Islamic and minor (but not major) Roman sacred sites in Morocco (Siraj, 1995:447-448).

[14] See Brignon et al., 1967; Laroui, 1977; and Pennell, 2000.

[15] While several coastal cities were primarily Jewish, and home to wealthy merchants who traded African goods with Europeans, the laws that regulated Jewish behavior under the Sultanate imposed poverty on much of the Moroccan Jewish population. Large numbers lived outside the prosperous cities, either in rural villages where they were the majority, or as unfavored minorities in Arab cities. Many left the country following the creation of Israel and the ensuing conflicts. Nonetheless, Morocco is seen as a homeland by many whose origins are in the area. Kosansky 2002 offers an account of Jewish pilgrimages in and to Morocco. The historical Jewish presence in Morocco is reflected in the inclusion of a Jewish being (*malk*, pl. *mluuk*) who, like the Muslim *mluuk* has recognized rights and may inhabit adepts during Gnaoua possession rites (Chlyeh, 1998). The *mluuk* are believed to protect those they inhabit.

[16] In a 1990 survey in Fez, for instance, 71.5 percent of households contained a single married couple and their offspring, while an additional 18.5 percent of households contained two married couple units (Guerraoui, 2000).

[17] Mounira Charrad (2001) argues that the conservatism of North African states' legal codes with regard to women derives from the post-colonial states' reliance on kin groups for support. While digressing from customary (Islamic) law when abolishing slavery and creating a national financial regime, women's status has been linked to national heritage. Tunisia has successfully prohibited polygyny not through rejecting the linkage between women's status and religious heritage, but by

promoting an alternative interpretation of the Quranic passage (Surah al-nisaa, verse 3) that is widely used to legitimize this custom (Kelly, 1996).

[18] For a first-hand account of the tourist's experience in Morocco that accurately represents both Western ethnocentrism and Moroccan responses to tourism, see Mayne, 2002.

[19] See Cohen, 1974, and Crick, 1989, for reviews of European studies of tourism prior to the 1970s. In ancient Rome, Seneca complained of the rudeness, litter, and ethnocentrism brought by tourism (MacCannell, 1976). Pre-modern tourism is discussed in Duchet, 1949; Fiefer, 1986; and Turner and Ash, 1976. On pre-modern tourism in Japan, see Noritake, 1992. Martinez, 1990, considers contemporary domestic tourism in Japan.

[20] Studies published well into the 1990s often began with a remark on the extent to which tourism has been overlooked or studiously ignored by anthropologists (see, for instance, Nunez, 1989:265; Van den Berghe, 1994:5; Veijola and Jokinen, 1994:125). There is now, however, a canon of anthropological works on the subject. *Hosts and Guests* (Smith, 1977) was updated in 1989, and recently inspired a second collection entitled *Hosts and Guests Revisited: Tourism Issues of the Twenty-First Century* (Smith and Brent, 2001). Dean MacCannell's *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*, which was first published in 1976, is considered another of the foundational works in the field. The appearance of Graburn's edited collection *Ethnic and Tourist Arts* in the same year marks the first sustained collaborative work. All three volumes continue to be influential. MacCannell, 1976, has been revised and issued in new editions twice since its original publication (1987, 1999), and Graburn, 1976, was celebrated in the recent volume *Unpacking Culture: Art and Commodity in Colonial and Postcolonial Worlds* (Phillips and Steiner, 1999).

[21] 2003 figures provided by the World Tourism Organization (WTO, 2003a). The WTO has its origins in an international trade association founded in 1925. In 1974, the association, which grouped national tourism offices, evolved into the World Tourism Organization, an organization under the aegis of the United Nations (Lanfant, 1991:14). Morocco's tourism figures are compiled by the Office National du Tourisme, which collects information from hotel registers. These figures are considered considerably lower than real numbers, since many international and domestic tourists stay in informal rentals (El Hadj, 2000). In 2001, more than 200 riads (urban estate homes owned by or rented to foreigners) operated in Marrakesh alone (La Vie Touristique Africaine, 2001:11).

[22] Resort tourism predominates. In 1998, according to the Moroccan tourism ministry, less than 50 percent of international tourists stayed in the cities classified as cultural centers by the state (Berrada, 2000:20).

[23] Colonial transportation patterns have had a marked impact on the emergence of tourism space within developing countries. One aspect of this is the predominance of former colonial capitals as tourist centers, despite a general decrease in their importance over time as national facilities and transportation networks develop (Oppermann, 1993).

[24] Hotel enclaves, guided tours, and premium-priced restaurants and shops attempt to create a barrier that filters the experience of tourists, and presents them with a picturesque and exotic Morocco. The depiction of Morocco in French tourist brochures is discussed in Mansouri, 1984.

[25] Tourism to Third World countries is strongly associated with colonization, as the extension of Western governments into formerly independent areas provided Western travelers with the patronage and protection of the colonial state. The improvements in roads, rail, and sea transportation necessary for efficient colonial administration also encouraged tourism. Edith Wharton wrote of her car trip through Morocco in 1918,

> Three years ago Christians were being massacred in the streets of Salé.... Now, thanks to the energy and the imagination of one of the greatest of colonial administrators, the country, at least in the French zone, is as safe and open as the opposite shore of Spain. (Wharton, 1920:4-5)

[26] In 1963, the United Nations Conference on Tourism and International Travel in Rome proclaimed that tourism constituted a contribution of vital importance to developing countries (Lanfant, 1991:14). Accordingly, between 1969 and 1979, the World Bank funded 24 tourism-sector projects in 18 countries (Lanfant, 1991:15). The World Bank specifically recommended to the Indonesian government that a tourism master plan be prepared for Bali, which was then marketed internationally as one of the world's last island paradises (Cabasset, 1995).

[27] Rail and hotel packages date to the mid-nineteenth century, when the Thomas Cook company in Britain began organizing trips to the local seashore (however see Chambers, 2000, on the emergence of European Grand Tour packages in the late eighteenth century). The growth of the British labor movement brought about the introduction of regular visits to the seashore, a practice that, until this period, had been limited to the bourgeoisie (Urry, 1990). Nonetheless, access to luxury and leisure do not entirely explain tourist motivation. In one view, participation in culturally valued practices (such as visiting the Eiffel Tower or spending a week at a beach resort) is considered a practice through which individuals gain status (MacCannell, 1976). Early Club Méditerranée (Club Med) patrons washed outside under bucket showers. An account of the founding of the company describes conditions during this period, and emphasizes how all-inclusive holiday packages allowed low and middle-income people to budget vacation expenses (Franco, 1970).

[28] Offsetting leakage costs to a very small degree is a higher general level of employment in Third World hotels compared to equivalent establishments in the West. This is linked to the lower relative cost of labour. One measure is the employee-to-bed ratio. In more developed countries, mid-class hotels demonstrate a 1:5 employee-to-bed ratio, while similar hotels located in less developed countries employ approximately one employee per bed (Shaw and Williams, 2002:173).

[29] Based principally on natural and archaeological resources, ecotourism incorporates guided adventure tours, planned nature and wildlife preserves, and unguided small group or individual itineraries. Its promoters, including many environmentalist groups, claim that ecotourism provides for sustainable development, allowing the preservation of the natural environment through deriving income from it without industrial or agricultural development. In early analyses ecotourism was viewed as a positive direction in tourism development. See Boo, 1990, for example. Bandy argues, in contrast, that ecotourism is a strategy that aims to commodify a natural environment that is otherwise not integrated into the capitalist system, as developers circumvent environmentalists and reach the profitable market of educated consumers who have eschewed mass tourism (Bandy, 1996).

[30] In Butler's (1980) cycle of tourism development, the earliest stage of tourism development is marked by a similarity of tourists to explorers. These first tourists are attracted by an area's unique natural or cultural features, arrive in small numbers, and make their own arrangements. There are no special facilities, and there is very little impact on the social and economic life of the community. As local residents and external actors begin to take the initiative in providing facilities primarily or exclusively for tourists, the region moves from the exploration phase to the involvement phase. Some locals begin to assume intermediary roles. A seasonal pattern of tourist arrivals may emerge, and governments and local authorities experience some pressure to improve facilities. Structural changes begin to emerge, at least among those directly involved with tourists. The development phase is marked by publicity in tourist-generating areas, a decline in local control relative to foreign capital, the construction of secondary tourist attractions (e.g. museums and theme parks), and the involvement of external labor. The destination now attracts institutional tourists who seek Western-style facilities, often at a level superior to what they enjoy at home. As the total number of tourists continues to grow, the rate of increase declines. Visitors outnumber permanent residents, who have considerably altered their social patterns and may express resentment. The area's economy is dominated by tourism. Eventually, the area enters a stagnation phase, as the industry struggles to maintain a stable level of visitor arrivals. Social and

environmental problems are evident. Tourist levels may finally show an absolute decrease, facilities decay, and local control increases. The area eventually ceases to be a tourist destination, although rejuvenation may occur.

[31] Economies of scale are evident in the tourism and transportation industries. The hotel industry, where international business travel has promoted the appearance of international brands, is a vivid example. In 1995, four international corporations owned more than 1000 hotels each, with the largest owning over 3900 hotels (Shaw and Williams, 2002:116-118).

[32] While generally optimistic, Stafford et al present a scenario in which the Moroccan tourism industry declines dramatically as a result of increased Islamic fundamentalism locally (Stafford et al,1996:137).

[33] Linda Richter writes that gender, like race, is usually absent from analyses of tourism except in the realm of employment (Richter, 1995:75). A brilliant exception is a critical essay on the place of the body in tourism analysis by Soile Veijola and Eeva Jokinen, who argue that current research neglects the core of tourist activity (Veijola and Jokinen, 1994).

[34] Events may be created and staged specifically for the purposes of highlighting local culture. In 1964, German folklorist Hans Moser distinguished between *folklorismus* (externally-organized) and folklore (naturally-occurring events), anticipating Handler and Linnekin's discussion of "genuine versus spurious" tradition (Handler and Linnekin, 1984; Bendix, 1989:136). Bendix argues that the distinction between externally-organized and naturally-occurring is irrelevant to festival performers. In contrast, in their discussion of a tourist attraction in which tribal dances performed on the lawn of a (post)colonial estate near Nairobi, Edward Bruner and Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett argue that tourism reproduces the "colonial drama of the savage/pastoral Maasai and the genteel British" (Bruner and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1994:435). The differential location of control over the production of these cultural displays is a key distinction.

[35] Toby Alice Volkman (1990) and Kathleen Adams (1998) offer a detailed description of the integration of Toraja motifs into both hotel and other tourist-oriented design and state architectural self-representations in Indonesia.

[36] Particularly in the context of ethnic tourism, photography is associated with domination and desire (Sontag, 1973; Barthes, 1981; Bruner and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1994).

[37] Kathleen Adams has written about the integration of Toraja carving motifs into the system of production for the tourist market. Her discussion of an urban merchant's attempt to patent Toraja carving motifs illustrates, in a vivid fashion, the exclusion of local residents from profits generated by the association of their expressive culture to saleable items (Adams, 1998:345). Torajas were outraged at the event, and the patent was rescinded.

[38] While in the field, I attended the Festival de Marrakech. Like the Interlaken alpine herding processions, William Tell plays, and winter forest spirit and fertility rituals (Bendix, 1989), the Festival de Marrakech attracts an audience that is primarily domestic. The festival is recorded for national television broadcast, and excerpts are featured in a weekly cultural program that highlights regional distinctiveness. The predominantly national character of this organized event, and its framing as a self-representation through recording for domestic broadcast, has a parallel in many "tourist" events, including the Aboakyer (Winneba Deer Hunting Festival) held annually near Accra (Ghana), described by Robert Wyllie (Wyllie, 1994).

[39] Likewise, Deirdre Meintel notes that similar processes of state intervention in community ritual in Cape Verde have not had a negative effect, perhaps because of the social characteristics of the area's tourists, who tend to be of Cape Verdian origin or ethnic background (Personal communication, 2004).

[40] Ray Debono-Roberts (2003) presents an alternative interpretation of the festa, rejecting Boissevain's emphasis on play and depicting it rather as the representation of a cohesive belief system (cult of saints) shared by participants.

2
A genealogy of henna practices

Introduction

In an earlier draft, I had imagined the title of this chapter as "Henna, Genuine and Spurious." Referencing the article "Tradition, Genuine or Spurious" by Richard Handler and Jocelyn Linnekin (Handler and Linnekin, 1984), as well as the earlier one "Culture, Genuine and Spurious" by Edward Sapir (1924), these enfolded allusions point to some of the conflict experienced with the commoditization of henna, and its transformation from a life cycle ritual performed within the domestic space to a tourist product offered in a busy carnival-like market. Local criticism of this transformation, addressed in the following chapters, recalls Sapir's description of "genuine" culture as a "sturdy plant growth, each remotest leaf and twig of which is organically fed by the sap at the core" (Sapir, 1924:412). What does tourist henna mean? Does it spring from the same culture-plant, or is it something else? Does it still have meaning and give satisfaction to members of the society in whose symbol-system it is embedded?

Or perhaps this question, whether or not tourist henna is "genuine," is misleading, since, as Handler and Linnekin remind us, tradition is an interpretive process (Handler and Linnekin, 1984:273). And so the answer has as much to do with historical and social context as with the question of what "genuine" henna (or any other tradition) means. Moreover, the necessity of commenting on the authenticity of marketplace henna, and the circumstances of this discourse, carries meaning. Modern henna, especially the forms produced for tourists, is implicitly and explicitly cast against a background of tradition, or rather, the remembered contexts in which henna practices

have been used. In her discussion of traditional Moroccan weddings, Deborah Kapchan notes the relationship between the terms *haqq* (real, authentic) and *taqalid* (tradition). Both exist socially, she contends, and are demonstrated through the practice of the community (Kapchan, 1996:155). In this chapter, I begin with this question of customary henna practices, which provides the well from which are drawn henna's meanings in contemporary Moroccan society.

Chapter 1 offered a brief discussion of henna and its uses. Here, I return to that theme, and look at the role, function, and symbolism of henna in Moroccan society through the ethnographic lens. The first part addresses the origins and diffusion of *Lawsonia* and henna practices. The second section examines the question of meaning, and summarizes contemporary and early nineteenth century ethnographic writing about henna's ritual functions. The aim of this section is to reveal the richly embroidered significations of henna through a broad survey of henna uses in Morocco and culturally and geographically near societies. In Chapter 5, I return to this theme, and, in the context of my ethnographic work, critically evaluate a series of analytical paradigms that propose to illuminate the role of henna practices in Moroccan society.

Henna and henna practices

What is the nature of henna, and why does it appear so frequently in a band of countries that stretches from North Africa through East Asia?[1] Henna (*Lawsonia inermis,* also known as *Lawsonia alba*) is found growing wild in very few parts of the world,[2] despite its use throughout much of North Africa, the Arab Gulf, and Asia as a commercial or domestic garden plant. Its uses are similar in the societies where it is found: some medicinal use, primarily as an anti-microbial agent, combined with

extensive and well-established ritual uses, particularly associated with marriage and circumcision.

The answer begins with the expansion of Islam through this part of the world beginning in the seventh century (see Hodgson, 1974). Henna application during life cycle rituals is part of a complex of phenomena (including male circumcision and female veiling) that were tightly integrated into the Islamic cultural pattern, despite their very peripheral status in the foundational text. All three are highly visible.

It is useful to describe the plant and its properties. Henna is a woody bush or tree with sweetly fragrant white or pink flowers.[3] Henna flowers are known as *faaghiya (*plural *faghuu)*; the oil produced from them is called *duhn al-faghuu.* This perfumed oil is valued in the Middle East, though unknown in Morocco (Diouri, 1997). Henry Field's description of the henna plant is abundantly detailed. He writes,

> The leaves are opposite, smooth, lanceolate, oblong, and pointed at both ends. They are about one inch long and ½ inch broad. The seeds are irregularly angular and marked with prominent ridges with intervening depressions. They are of a reddish-brown color. The taste is bitter. (Field, 1958:95)

It is grown in light shade (Scarone, 1939:9), in regions that are characterized by a long hot growing season and adequate water (typically provided through irrigation).[4]

Henna leaves produce a bright green powder that, mixed with water and applied to skin, gives a reddish color. The paste is initially a bright green, but turns muddy brown within an hour of adding the water; as the paste dries on the skin, the paste turns brownish-black, but dyes the skin a bright color. Since the paste is removed from the skin, leaving permanently coloured skin cells, it is considered a dye, rather than a paint (that is, pigment).[5] The color ranges from yellow to pale orange to jewel-like red to deep brown to black, depending on concentration in the powder of lawsone, the active

ingredient that is present in the leaves themselves, the degree of keratinization (thickening) of the skin, the length of time the dye remains in contact with the skin, and the use of mordants (or rather, acid catalysts) such as lemon juice, or aluminium sulphide and lime (see Chapter 3).[6] The red, brown, and black shades are most desired by Moroccans. Red, described as a joyous color, is preferred for brides.[7]

The dye fades over time, depending again on factors including dye quality and after-care. The powder must be kept from dampness, but can be stored in an airtight package for a year or more without losing potency. After-care varies widely from region to region, and even from family to family, and often includes the application of sugar and lemon. One invariable element is that the hennaed woman must refrain from washing dishes or clothes in order to maintain the color of the dye. The impact of this practice is that the burden of housework is temporarily shifted to other household members. In the case of rituals invoking important role changes (marriage, childbirth, end of mourning), this temporary exclusion from household labour is a significant advantage, all the more so at times (such as marriage and circumcision) that also involve large celebrations and the attendant increase in household work.

The dye paste is prepared at home. Both whole leaves and milled henna are widely available in urban areas. The whole leaves must be pounded in a mortar and pestle (*mehras*), an arduous procedure (Vonderheyden, 1934a:39). While most urban women, however, use commercially milled henna (available in plastic wrapped boxes that retained their freshness), the whole leaves are still widely available, and are purchased particularly by rural women, because they were several dirhams cheaper per kilo. Whole henna is also purchased for engagements and weddings, where it is one of the customary (indeed, required) gifts presented by the groom to the bride. Henna is grown in the

southern part of Morocco, and virtually all henna available in 2000-2001 was domestic.[8] A small amount of commercially prepared "black henna," a dry mixture of black dye and henna (to which water is added before use), is imported from India. [9]

Toxicity

The wide use over a long period of henna lends support to the assumption that there are no important negative effects associated with its use. [10] In fact, the neutral and even beneficial effects of henna have been supported, with some reservations, by contemporary scientific literature. As discussed below, these reservations pertain both to the chemicals often added to henna in the manufacturing process, as well as to its use on particular populations.

Based on a study of 100 infested patients, henna was found to be highly effective at removing lice, with success rates of 50 percent (mixed with karkada) to 100 percent (mixed with sheah) after one week (El Bashir and Fouad, 2002). Henna has also been shown to have antibacterial and anti-fungal properties (Bhunavaneswari et al, 2002). *In vitro* tests reported by Kirkland and Marzin (2003) allow the authors to conclude that the natural dye ingredient of henna does not pose a cancer risk.

Despite these beneficial properties, both prepared henna and the pure powder may have negative health consequences. P-phenylenediamine (PPD), an aniline dye frequently added to make a simple (one-step) black henna paste, is a common allergen, with effects ranging from localized reactions that can involve severe scarring, to more severe generalized systemic allergic responses.[11] While PPDs and related substances have been used in hair dyes and other black colorants (photographic dyes, leather dyes) with relative safety, the strong concentration of PPDs in adulterated henna brings a dramatic increase in allergic sensitization.

The use of henna mixes containing PPD was extremely uncommon in Morocco in 2000 and 2001, although by August 2001 I had observed its use twice and a brand containing black dye was then newly available from a local cosmetics shop. While many artisans spoke disparagingly of this form of black henna, their criticisms usually centered on the thick lines this dye produced using existing Moroccan henna techniques. In fact, there is considerable desire on their part to develop a rapid black henna technique. International tourists are eager to have dark henna, and reluctant to undergo the time-consuming two-step traditional black henna application discussed in Chapter 3. I alerted artisans to the potential danger (for themselves and for their customers) of henna mixes containing PPD dyes, but met with frequent disbelief. PPD sensitivity becomes obvious only after the second exposure, and then several days or weeks after the design was applied. Only one artisan had personally seen the telltale injury: an open wound in the pattern of the henna motif.

Extreme reactions to pure henna, rather than PPD-containing mixed pastes, are uncommon but well established. Kandil et al (1996) report 15 cases over 10 years of acute hemolysis (premature rupture of the red blood cells) following the full-body application of henna to newborns, while Raupp et al (2001) reported four cases of acute hemolysis, with one death despite transfusion. This severe reaction is associated with glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase (G6PD) deficiency, a genetic disorder that affects 10 percent of people globally (Scriver et al, 1995). People suffering from G6PD deficiency are known to experience anemia and jaundice as a result of hemolysis following exposure to oxidants found in pharmaceuticals (including anti-malarial drugs, sulfanomides, and anti-itching drugs) and other sources, including henna and fava beans.[12] (The association of fava beans with this disease is reflected in G6PD deficiency's

common name, favism.) The sufferer's urine may be red, caused by the excretion of red blood cells. Fatalities of G6PD deficient newborns after full-body application of henna have prompted Kandil et al to strongly discourage parents from applying henna to young children.

Local practice in some henna-using communities reflects knowledge of this common genetic disorder. Describing henna practices in India, Mahendra Bhanawat writes that there is a common belief that henna causes illness in children. He states,

> There has been a practice, even among children, to get their hands pasted with menhadi [henna] designs. But tiny children are usually dissuaded from doing so. If a child insists upon that, an attempt is made to placate him with a menhadi daub on his little finger. The reluctance, on the part of the parents to allow their children to smear their palms with menhadi paste, is due to the superstition that the use of menhadi on children's hands brings disease. It is also believed that a child whose hands are smeared with menhadi often falls ill, but it is also reported that an ailing child recovers immediately after menhadi is applied on his or her hands. (Bhanawat, 1976:16)

Indian parents' discouragement of henna application to young children is thought-provoking in light of the notes above on the incidence of hemolytic anemia after henna application to newborns with the common (and hereditary) G6PD deficiency. Henna-induced acute hemolysis should be investigated as a potential cause of infant deaths in Morocco, given the ethnographic evidence of henna rubbing of newborns discussed later in this chapter.

Origin and diffusion of *Lawsonia* and henna practices

There is much evidence of the use of red pigments, especially ochre, to color the body and to draw figures throughout early human history.[13] Although ochre users have typically been in the minority, the pattern of ochre use is consistent, and has been maintained over long periods. Ernst Wreschner states, in fact, that along with tool

making, red ochre use is one of the "meaningful regularities in human evolution" (Wreschner, 1980:631). He contends that the application of red pigments to the body was originally without symbolic meaning, but gained significance because it allowed group members to recognize each other, and distinguish the group from neighbouring populations.[14] The process of mixing and applying the pigment eventually took on aspects of ritual, as the contexts for painting were institutionalized. Red, with its apparent resemblance to blood, can be associated with both death and life. In Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, ochre is found both in funerary assemblages (pieces are buried with bodies, bodies are sprinkled with ochre, fabric bands are dyed red) and in fertility symbolism, where it coats figurines.[15]

There are many similarities between ochre and henna use. The extent of henna's association with Islam and Muslim tradition suggests that it was already used in Middle East at the time of Islam's emergence in the seventh century AD. There is ample evidence of the use of henna in Pharaonic Egypt, where hieroglyphics refer to it by the name *pouker*. (The hieroglyphic *pouker* is the origin of the Hebrew form *kopher*, the Copt *kouper*, and the Greek terms *kupros* and *cypros*.) It is unclear, however, in what contexts it was used. While the hands and feet of the Ramses II mummy (and other mummies from that period) were colored with henna, the hands and feet of living people depicted in murals are depicted with the same color as the rest of the body. This suggests that henna was used to some extent, and perhaps restricted to funerary rituals (Aubaile-Sallenave, 1982:131).[16]

However, there is older (though less abundant) evidence of henna being used in Sumer, Mari and Babylon, where it was called *henneh*. A single statue from this region of a woman (dated 2650-2550 BC) has traces of henna on the face and hands.[17] A later

Assyrian text (eighth century BC) refers to the dyeing of a bride's palms and fingernails with *henneh* (Aubaile-Sallenave, 1982:129-130). The principal evidence for this belief is linguistic: in Morocco, as in other Muslim societies, the principal word for henna is based on the root ح ن ن (h-n-n), which itself seems to be of foreign origin as it is accompanied by no other cognate nouns or verbs.[18]

The connections between henna and marriage are significant, as the use of henna during marriage celebrations later emerged as a cultural trait that accompanied the spread of Islam from the Middle East throughout Africa and Asia. An account of henna use in Lamu, Kenya, states that it is used by Muslim women in this community, and cites a local tradition that attributes its origin to Aisha, the favourite wife of the Prophet (Young, 1992:17). The association of henna with the Muslim population strongly suggests that it arrived there at the same time as Islam. Nor is there evidence of the use of henna in North Africa before the region's integration into the Islamic empire (Aubaile-Sallenave 1982:135). Margarita Dobert's annotated bibliography of the widely dispersed literature on henna practices in sub-Saharan Africa suggests that it was introduced by Muslim traders, and bears the principal trait (association with weddings and circumcisions) found elsewhere (Dobert, 1985:2, 5, 8).[19] The plant and its uses diffused as a single complex, incorporated into Arabic as *hinna*. Henry Field notes that henna appears in cultures that have until recently used tattooing as well; with the introduction of Islam, henna replaced tattooing, a practice that is prohibited in orthodox Islam (Field, 1958:4).[20]

Henna in Jewish wedding customs

Henna has also emerged as a significant feature of Jewish wedding traditions, though only in later periods do we have detailed knowledge of its application. Henna was

known, however, in the early Jewish community. One piece of evidence is a passage that describes the virtues and beauty of a bride, "My beloved is to me a cluster of henna blossoms in the vineyards of Engedi" (Song of Solomon 1:14). Henna practices that emerged in the Middle East and were well established by the time Islam moved from the Arabian Peninsula throughout Asia and North Africa may have extended to Jewish communities already at that time; alternatively, henna use may have been introduced by neighboring Muslim groups during the long cohabitation between Jews and Muslims in North Africa and the Middle East. In this section, I present data that strongly support later cross-pollination or cultural sharing between Jewish and Muslim communities in Morocco, yet without entirely discarding the possibility of earlier henna use.[21]

By the Roman period, there were already large, politically organized Jewish populations in the region of contemporary Morocco (Slousch, 1906:2). Religious persecution in Spain brought additional refugees.[22] A description of early twentieth-century Jewish wedding customs in Salé, a city of pre-Roman origin adjoining the contemporary Moroccan capital Rabat, demonstrates the similarity of Jewish and Muslim henna practices in this region (Tadjouri, 1923:395-405). For purposes of comparison, and in order to increase the availability of Tadjouri's data (published in French in a Moroccan scholarly journal in 1923), I present these ethnographic notes in some detail.[23]

The average age at which couples became engaged in the Moroccan Jewish community, at the time Tadjouri recorded his observations, was 15 for males and 12 for females. Marriage took place generally six months after the engagement. The wedding celebration itself was composed of discrete events spread over five or more days. The first of these practices was the presentation of henna as one of the engagement gifts offered by the prospective groom.

The wedding itself began on a Saturday, as the groom and his friends met and formed a mock government. With the groom himself as the king, the group elected a minister, a judge, guards, and other positions that they would maintain throughout the wedding. This group had the privilege of attending the parties of the young women, which they prevented married men from entering. The following day, the door of the bride's and groom's houses were decorated with bright geometric designs, incorporating fish, branches, and leaves. The design was inscribed with the text (in Hebrew) "Blessed be you at your entrance and at your exit."[24] On the following day, honey and semolina cakes were distributed to the neighbors.

The Thursday of that week was called the day of *azmomeg* (Tadjouri, 1923:396). The literal meaning of azmomeg is unknown. On this day took place what Tadjouri describes (unlike the other preceding rites) as an important ceremony: invited guests applied henna to the bride in such as manner as to cover her body without decorating it. The similarity with a contemporary Muslim ritual that also occurs early in the marriage festivities is significant. (I return to this theme, and describe the Muslim version of this ceremony as it was recounted to me in the field, in Chapters 3 and 5.) Female guests and musicians were invited, and the bride was wrapped in a white sheet, with her face covered by a green cloth. The groom sent a tray with fruit and sweets, and a bowl of henna paste with an egg placed inside. The bride was unwrapped, and the egg broken over her head, and spilled into the bowl. Each guest in turn took some henna from the bowl and applied it to the bride's hair, saying "Biad-essahd" ("Happy future," Tadjouri, 1923:396).[25] Plastered in henna, the hair was wrapped again, and remained so, until the day of henna, which took place five days later.

The following day, a festive meal for the young women was held at the house of the bride, with the groom and his court in attendance. That night, the bride and groom were seated next to each other. The groom wore five rings, and many gold bracelets. After his hand was dyed with henna, he would place a gold coin in his bride's hand, and henna was applied over it (Tadjouri, 1923:397). (While Tadjouri is not more specific, the practice suggests that a solid layer of paste, rather than a decorative pattern, is applied.) The next day, the bride returned the gold coin to the groom. This day was called the day of *fekkan*, the day of removal.

What followed was the day of the vow. Repeating the phrases uttered by the rabbi, as the groom pronounceed the vow of his intention to marry his bride in good faith. Following the vow, a cow was led into the courtyard. The cow was dressed as a woman, in ribbons, a silk scarf, flowers, and jewels. Guests placed contributions for the butcher's fees on a tray placed on the ground between the cow's feet. The cow was then examined for ritual purity, and slaughtered. (Tadjouri, 1923:397-398)

Despite the prominent role of henna in the rites of the day of azmomeg, it was another day that is called the "day of henna." The day of henna followed the day of the vow, and the sealing of the groom's word with the blood of the woman/cow. This ceremony began with the accompaniment of the bride to the *mikvah* (ritual bath), where she washed. To satisfy the *chedim* (which Tadjouri glosses as "devils") that may be jealous of the newlyweds, an old woman brought gifts for them as well: a jar of jam, a glass of wine, a mirror, a comb, and makeup (Tadjouri, 1923:398). The henna and egg were removed from the bride's hair, and wrapped again in the white cloth that had covered her hair during this week. Sugar and wheat were added to the packet, which was placed in the couple's mattress.

> It is a general good luck charm in which each object plays a special role: the egg, because it is white, is a sign of a happy future, the sugar as is a symbol of gentleness, and the wheat will make the couple have many children. (Tadjouri, 1923:398, my translation)

After her ritual purification in the mikvah, the bride was seated in the courtyard, on a chair that had been placed on a table. Surrounded by guests, a specialist (*masta*, from the Moroccan Arabic *mashatta*, hairdresser), described by Tadjouri as "an old woman" (Tadjouri, 1923:399, my translation), applied makeup, kohl, swak, and henna to the bride. Henna, along with milk, is thought to please other-worldly beings (Goulven, 1927:63) and so, in appeasing them, provide a degree of protection. The guests offered cash gifts to the bride, and a meal of sweets and tea was served. Finally, the groom arrived, mounted on a horse and dressed

> as an Arab cavalier, in a colored jellaba, a turban wrapped round his head, belt, leather bag, sword, rifle, etc... His appearance in this disguise evokes the enthusiasm of those present; he comes and seats himself next to the bride; the masta dyes his hands with henna. (Tadjouri, 1923:199, my translation)

The groom's masquerade is significant, as Moroccan Jews were formerly prohibited from wearing dress that resembled Muslim clothing; men hence frequently wore black garments and slippers, though with the arrival of the French in Morocco, Jewish men began to wear white and blue outer clothing as well (Goulven, 1927:24-28).

During the groom's henna ceremony, his attendants, mounted on horses, waited at the entrance, and sounded their bugles for him to come. Accompanied by the neighborhood children, the mounted court then galloped through the *mellah* (Jewish quarter), firing their rifles. The massed population of the mellah cheered them on. A final masquerade took place before the end of the evening: the groom's men hid bread and vegetables in his belt, and, taking him before the bride, pulled out the hidden scraps

of food and declared before the laughing guests that the groom was a thief. (Tadjouri, 1923:398-399)

Clearly depicted in these two role-plays, the Jew as Arab and the affine as thief, is a ritual of reversal within the structure of the wedding. Elaine Combs-Schilling (1989:188-220) describes a nearly identical scene played out at contemporary Muslim weddings in Morocco. There is no corresponding reversal (or Jewish role) in the Muslim version. Instead, Combs-Schilling contends, the Muslim groom takes on the symbolic aspects of the monarch, as he becomes head of household. Comparison with the cognate Jewish ritual adds depth and richness to this interpretation, as well as an element of play and subversion as the Jewish groom too becomes monarch.

On the following day took place the signing of the marriage contract and act of intercourse that establishes the virginity of the bride and the virility of the groom. There is no further mention of henna in the events that celebrate the consummation of the marriage, the day of the fish (a competition in which the newlyweds, each supported by their parents, attempt to be the first to slit open and gut a fish, thus demonstrating which spouse will hold more power in the relationship), and the *tonaboda*, "second marriage" that follows the return of the bride to the conjugal home (usually with the groom's parents) after the 15 days of ritual impurity following the consummation of the marriage. (Tadjouri, 1923:402-406)

Henna use in India

Along with ancient Sumer, northern India is often suggested as an area where henna may have originated. Mahendra Bhanawat writes,

> When *menhadi* [henna] came into use in India is a matter of controversy. Some scholars are of the opinion that it originated in our country, while

> others believe that it was an alien gift. The ancient treatises *Charak Sanhita* and *Sushrut Sanhita* say that it was used as a medicine as well as a cosmetic of superior quality, fit for use of kings and emperors. According to Eliot Smith, menhadi is a gift of Egypt where it was used for coloring the hands and feet of mummies. Similarly another noted writer Dullan believes that it came to India with the Persian horses sometime in vikram samvat 712. On the other hand Nityanath Singh writes in his famous epic *Rasratnakar* that the word menhadi was in vogue in India 850 years ago. (Bhanawat, 1976:5)

He continues, noting that the cave paintings of Ajanta and Allora depict a reclining "princess" whose hands and feet are being decorated with "flowery and artistic designs" (Bhanawat, 1976:5-6).

In contemporary India and Pakistan, both Hindus and Muslims make extensive use of henna.[26] The occasions on which henna is applied are similar in both religious communities, and include weddings, specific religious holidays, and individual prayer (Bhanawat 1976). Bhanawat writes,

> Boys and girls never apply menhadi on their feet as it is considered ominous. Some people even ascribe the late marriage of a girl or her failure to get married in life to the application of menhadi to her feet. There is another superstition that Laxmi, the Goddess of wealth, dwells in menhadi and therefore a pregnant woman who violates this established practice knowingly or unknowingly and applies menhadi on any part of her body, is doomed to suffer economic hardships all her life (Bhanawat, 1976:17).

There is no taboo on the use of henna by pregnant women in Morocco, and in fact, the application of henna prior to childbirth is a well-established tradition in some areas. This bears some similarity to the ritual application of henna to the nails of a Hindu woman after she has given birth, a practice Bhanawat says ensures that she will "regain her vitality" (Bhanawat, 1976:20). However, generally speaking, these practices reveal the existence in India of life-cycle rules that regulate henna application, and add weight to the common origin theory.[27]

Single plants appear in the wild, and use patterns in north India vary from the dominant pattern, further supporting this hypothesis. For example, not only is henna grown in gardens, but it also is used as a hedge. The dye is obtained in a different manner, from fresh leaves rather than from dried ones, as fresh leaves are mixed with betel or areca nut, *Areca catechu*, which acts as a tannin-rich mordant. (Grieves, 1931) However, the sudden appearance in the eleventh century of the Sanskrit word for henna, suggests that its use, if not the plant itself, was introduced by Muslims. Indian words for henna include *mehndi* and its related forms (including *medi*, *medhi*, and *mahidi*) that refer specifically to henna, as well as other terms that refer generally to red dye plants, or to other specific red dye plants that appear to have been supplanted by henna. (Aubaile-Sallenave, 1982:137-138) Linguistic variants of *hinna* are found in South and Southeast Asia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam, south China, East Africa and Madagascar, Spain and Sicily, North Africa (in Berber as well as in Arabic), Iran, and the Arabic-speaking Middle East (Aubaile-Sallenave, 1982:137-139).

Documentary evidence and ethnographic description

Henna use has been described by many European and Arab scholars, though it has rarely been the explicit focus of inquiry. In this section, I review the variety of textual sources that contain information about henna and henna practices in Morocco and neighbouring countries, as well as the central Middle East from which these customs emerged.

Henna use in early Muslim texts

The earliest texts that describe henna use in Muslim societies are Arab texts that mention the use of henna for ritual, medical, and decorative purposes. Early Muslims

memorized not only the Qur'an as it was revealed to the prophet Muhammad, but also the *hadith*, which are narratives of Muhammad's actions and words. While the hadith has been kept separate from the revealed message, canonical collections of hadith are nonetheless preserved as religious texts and almost equally revered by Muslims as a model of proper behaviour. For anthropologists, they constitute an ethnographic treasure due to the amount of detail contained it in about daily life in seventh century peninsular Arab society.[28]

Henna is mentioned in several passages found in a number of the standard hadith collections, *Sahih Bukhari*, *Sahih Muslim*, and *Sunan Abu Dawud*.[29] Of the 21 instances in which henna is mentioned, eleven refer to its use by men for dying hair and beards. These hadiths record instances in which the Prophet recommended that henna be used to cover white hair, as well as evidence that henna was used by the "companions of the Prophet," the people who were part of the Muslim community during his lifetime, and whose behaviour was seen and commented upon by him. For instance,

> Narrated AbuDharr: The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: The best things with which grey hair are changed are henna and katam. (*Sunan Abu Dawud*, Book 33, Number 4193)
>
> Narrated Anas: (the servant of the Prophet) When the Prophet arrived (at Medina), there was not a single companion of the Prophet who had grey and black hair except Abu Bakr, and he dyed his hair with henna and katam (i.e. plants used for dying hair). Through another group of narrators, Anas bin Malik said, "When the Prophet arrived at Medina, the eldest amongst his companions was Abu Bakr. He dyed his hair with henna and katam till it became of dark red color." (*Sahih Bukhari*, Volume 5, Book 58, Number 257)

In addition to these two, the other hadiths in which henna use by men for dying hair and beards is demonstrated and approved are *Sahih Muslim*, Book 30, Number 5779-5782; *Sunan Abu Dawud*, Book 33, Number 4194, 4196, and 4199; and *Sahih Bukhari*, Volume 1, Book 4, Number 167, and Volume 5, Book 58, Number 257. Men's decorative use of

henna in the hadith is limited to dyeing hair and beards. *Sunan Abu Dawud* Book 41, Number 4910 records that the Prophet ordered that a *mukhannath* (third gender of male sex) who had dyed his hands and feet with henna be banished, but not killed:

> A mukhannath who had dyed his hands and feet with henna was brought to the Prophet (peace be upon him). He asked: What is the matter with this man? He was told: Apostle of Allah! He affects women's get-up. So he ordered regarding him and he was banished to an-Naqi'. The people said: Apostle of Allah! Should we not kill him? He said: I have been prohibited from killing people who pray.

Five of the 21 hadith refer to the color of water in a spoiled well. *Sahih Bukhari*, Volume 7, Book 71, Number 658 (and similar accounts in 007.071.660, 007.071.661, 008.073.089) states that the color of the water in the well into which a charm against the Prophet had been thrown was "like the infusion of henna leaves." Similarly, in *Sahih Muslim*, Book 26, Number 5428 Aisha describes the water of this well as "yellow like henna."

Henna use was a prominent aspect female adornment during this time, and constituted a marker that distinguished men from women. While the mukhannath's use of henna on his hands and feet was considered aberrant, in another hadith, a woman without henna was admonished, and told to use it. From the *Sunan Abu Dawud*, Book 33, Number 4154:

> Narrated Aisha, Ummul Mu'minin: A woman made a sign from behind a curtain to indicate that she had a letter for the Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him). The Prophet (peace be upon him) closed his hand, saying: I do not know this is a man's or a woman's hand. She said: No, a woman. He said: If you were a woman, you would make a difference to your nails, meaning with henna.

Nonetheless, the use of henna was not considered obligatory, and the Prophet himself disliked the smell, as recorded in *Sunan Abu Dawud*, Book 33, Number 4152:

> Narrated Aisha, Ummul Mu'minin: Karimah, daughter of Hammam, told that a woman came to Aisha (Allah be pleased with her) and asked her

> about dyeing with henna. She replied: There is no harm, but I do not like it. My beloved, the Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him), disliked its odour.

Its decorative use was forbidden, along with perfumes and other cosmetics, during mourning, as indicated in the *Sunan Abu Dawud*, Book 12, Number 2297:

> Narrated Umm Salamah, Ummul Mu'minin: The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: A woman whose husband has died must not wear clothes dyed with safflower (*usfur*) or with red ochre (*mishq*) and ornaments. She must not apply henna and collyrium.

And, in the same collection, Book 12, Number 2298:

> Narrated Umm Salamah, Ummul Mu'minin: ...The Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) came to visit me when Abu Salamah died, and I had put the juice of aloes in my eye. He asked: What is this, Umm Salamah? I replied: It is only the juice of aloes and contains no perfume. He said: It gives the face a glow, so apply it only at night and remove it in daytime, and do not comb yourself with scent or henna, for it is a dye.

Henna was also used medicinally by the Prophet, as recorded in *Sunan Abu Dawud*, Book 28, Number 3849:

> Narrated Salmah: the maid-servant of the Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him), said: No one complained to the Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) of a headache but he told him to get himself cupped,[30] or of a pain in his legs but he told him to dye them with henna.

None of the hadith describe henna being used in a ritual context of birth, circumcision, or marriage. Yet, through these accounts of henna's use by the Prophet and the men and women of his community, the plant acquired a gloss of religious approbation that has extended to its use in rituals described later in this chapter. In addition to the henna practices mentioned in codified hadith collections discussed here, henna was integrated into a less well-substantiated body of tradition that existed alongside these religious/scholarly documents. Since these anecdotes were not authenticated by known chains of transmission from teller to teller to observer, they were excluded from the formal body of hadith literature. In many instances, this body of

tradition served to translate existing local practices into religious idiom, giving them an appropriately Islamic veneer. This tradition depicts henna as much dearer to the Prophet than do the canonic collections. For instance, in the oral tradition, the Prophet describes henna as "the chief of the sweet-scented flowers of this world and of the next," and says that spending a single dirham on henna is "greater than that of a thousand spent for charity." (Humphrey-Newell, 1981:14) This contrast between the canonic hadith and the popular tradition suggests that henna acquired its religious association after the lifetime of the Prophet.

Henna in Arab medical texts and practice

While the ritual use of henna is most significant in Islamic societies, henna practices include medical uses, such as those that were known at the time of the Prophet. It has been used particularly for skin ailments. An early description of henna's medical uses can be found in Al-Kindi's (d. 870 AD) medical text *Aqrabadhin,* which gives six recipes in which henna is mixed with other ingredients. These treatments are recommended for various skin problems (ulcers and itching) and in a tooth powder (to combat decay and bad breath) (Levey, 1966).[31] The more recent use of henna in Morocco to treat skin ailments has been described by Legey (1926) and Laoust (1920). Similarly, Thierry describes the treatment of abscesses with a paste of crushed mint and henna that is reapplied hourly (Thierry, 1917:29-30).

Contemporary medicinal uses of henna are also documented for Mauritania (Tauzin, 1998:22-27). Tauzin gives four categories of treatments in which henna is used in Mauritania: to treat skin diseases, either to strengthen or to disinfect the skin; to purge the body; to heal a diseased part of the body by nourishing it transdermally; and to regulate the body's humoral balance (Tauzin, 1998:22-23). In Arab humoral medicine,

henna is considered "cold" (in fact, it cools the skin as it dries) and is thus able to treat illnesses caused by a surplus of heat in the body.[32] However, in Mauritania as elsewhere, henna is only one among many herbs and other compounds that are part of the traditional pharmacopeia.

Other accounts

Early travelers' accounts mention the use of henna primarily as a cosmetic. One of the oldest travelers' accounts is the history of Africa by Leo Africanus, born c. 1491 in Granada of North African parentage and educated in Rome. *The History and Description of Africa* begins with accounts of the cities, topography, and governments of North and sub-Saharan Africa. Berber and Arab inhabitants of Mauritania Tingitana (present-day Morocco), Leo Africanus writes, were "very gorgeously attired" in linen and silver. Although, as he tells us, women were silent and hid their faces when they encountered male strangers, they traveled with their husbands to war "to the end that she may cheere vp her good man, and giue him encouragement" (Africanus, 1600:159). He continues with a description of their practice of coloring the face, chest, arms, and hands, and identifies this as an Arab practice:

> Their damsels which are vnmarried doe vsually paint their faces, brests, armes, hands, and fingers with a kinde of counterfeit colour. But this fashion was first brought in by those Arabians, which before we called Africans, what time they began first of all to inhabite that region; for before then, they neuer vsed any false or glozing colours.

In contrast, he tells us, Berber women paint circles on the apples of their cheeks, and apply designs between the eyebrows and on the chin:

> The women of Barbarie vse not this fond kind of painting, but contenting themseues only their their naturall hiew, they regarde not such fained ornaments: howbeit sometimes they will temper a certaine colour with hens-dung and saffron, wherewithal they paint a little round spot on the bals of their cheeks, about the bredth of a French crowne. Like wise

> betweene their eie-browes they make a triangle; and paint vpon their chinnes a patch like vnto an oliue leafe. Some of them also doe paint their eie-browes: and this custome is very highly esteemed of by the Arabian poets and by the gentlemen of that countrie. (Africanus, 1600:159-160).

Although the existence of henna mills in Islamic Spain suggests that this practice was known in that society as well (Glick, 1999), it is clear from Leo Africanus's description that this custom was not a familiar one.

Henna is again mentioned in passing in a seventeenth century French diplomat's work on Moroccan politics and society. A description of manners and customs includes a brief reference to the yellow dye that colored women's palms and feet (Pidou de Saint-Olon, 1695:83).

Despite their evident ethnocentrism and lack of ethnographic detail, these texts offer us the opportunity to document the existence of henna practices (if not their context or frequency) in earlier periods. To a lesser extent, these earlier records also allow a general understanding of techniques, based on both observed practices and on description of the finished designs.

A nuanced picture emerges from the accounts of nineteenth and early twentieth-century writers who focused on practices and beliefs, and based their accounts on long-term observation and interaction. These accounts of household life describe the primary occasions with which henna application was associated. Occasions associated with henna can be grouped into several categories: life cycle events, religious festivals, supplication, medical treatment, and adornment.

The Finnish anthropologist Edward (Edvard) Westermarck, who traveled through much of Morocco over the course of sixteen visits in the early twentieth century, compiled detailed descriptions of daily activities, periodic rituals, and life cycle

events. Westermarck's numerous publications on Moroccan topics address topics such as magic (1904), marriage (1914), ritual and belief (1926), proverbs (1931), religious hybridity (1933). His extensive description of Moroccan rituals, including weddings, circumcisions, feast day celebrations, and magic practices, provided much of the grist for two literature surveys on henna practices of North African Muslims by M. Vonderheyden which appeared in the *Journal de la Société des Africanistes* (Vonderheyden, 1934aa, 1934b). Vonderheyden's careful study also incorporates data from the vast literature produced by French colonial staff in Morocco and Algeria. This ethnographic tradition has been extensively criticised by contemporary North African scholars for its motivated use of science to support the colonial regime; nonetheless, as one author states, this ethnographic data can be used for other purposes than which it was intended, providing the right answers to the wrong questions (Mahfoudh, 1988-89:249-250).[33] For our purposes, one of the most significant of these authors was Françoise Legey, a doctor who resided seven years in Morocco and recorded her knowledge of many aspects of Arab and Berber society, including medicine, ritual, and farming (Legey, 1926). Emile Laoust has presented a similarly broad ethnography of Moroccan society in the form of a collection of Berber vocabulary and texts (Laoust, 1920).

The last major author of this group writing in the 1920s was J. Herber, another medical doctor who published numerous articles on tattoos (Herber, 1919, 1923, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1929a, 1929b, 1946, 1948a, 1949b, 1951). While tattoo designs recorded by Herber (and later by Susan Searight, 1984) do not resemble contemporary henna designs, there is some overlap in the parts of the body to which they are applied — hands/arms and feet/legs. My analysis of Herber's data suggests that tattooing, which was widespread in Morocco at the time of his research, was not associated with rites of

passage (especially the life cycle changes that I argue are mediated by henna) nor was it applied in a ritual context. Rather, tattooing was a life-long process through which women's concerns with illness, marital stability, fertility, and group membership were inscribed onto the body producing a cumulative narrative that is unlike henna. Like henna designs, however, individual tattoos were given meaning by the context in which they were applied, not by a fixed correspondence between signifier and signified.

American and English long-term residents who were not associated with the French colonial administration produced a third group of ethnographic accounts. Notable among these are accounts by Budget Meakin, an American who resided much of his life in Tangiers, and by Emily, who used the title Sharifa of Wazzan. The British woman Emily Keene married a member of the Moroccan political elite in the late nineteenth century, and later wrote about her experiences of Moroccan household life as the wife of the Sharif of Wazzan (also Ouezzane).[34] The Sharifa was an Englishwoman who married a Moroccan notable, bore several children, and became the matriarch of an affluent and socially important clan. One of her most important accomplishments was the introduction of smallpox vaccinations in the north of Morocco. Her memoir gives a detailed account of domestic life.

Contemporary scholars have rarely problematized henna practices, though there is frequent (albeit usually brief) mention of henna application during wedding and circumcision celebrations. Here, I sketch out the contexts in which henna is (or has been) used in Morocco and the surrounding area, as portrayed in the ethnographic record. In order to present a balanced picture of these rituals and of the role and function of henna therein, I describe them in some detail.[35] These descriptions will form

the basis of the theoretical analysis presented in the final sections of this chapter and in Chapter 5. The data is organized according to life stage.

Henna and ritual in ethnography

> Henna (*hanna*), the well-known colouring matter produced from the leaves of the Egyptian privet (*Lawsonia inermis*), is not merely a favourite cosmetic among the women but is also frequently used as a means of protection against evil influences; and the same is the case with walnut root or bark (*swak*), with which women paint their lips and teeth brownish, and antimony (*khol*), with which they paint their eyes black. But though chiefly used by the women, all these paints are also on special occasions used by men, and henna and antimony are applied to new-born babes as well. In some instances, especially as refer to child-bed women and infants, I have been expressly told that the paints in question are meant to serve as a protection against *jnun* [spirits]. (Westermarck 1920:58-59)

Westermarck's comments on the function of henna were highly influential. Earlier remarks by travelers on the use of henna by Moroccan women suggested it was a form of adornment (eg Africanus, 1600; Pidou de Saint-Olon, 1695). Drawing on observation and interviews with residents in many parts of Morocco over an extended period, and influenced by currents of cultural analysis emerging in Europe (especially emerging theories about magic and ritual), Westermarck offered a new interpretation that focused on the potential instrumentality of henna practices.

Wrapping and naming rituals

Henna is traditionally one of the first substances applied to infants. This practice is documented extensively in the ethnographic notes from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Westermarck records,

> At Fez, on the day after the birth of the child and on the two following days as well, the midwife rubs its body with a mixture of henna, sugar, alum, marjoram (mardaddush), mint (na'na'), mastic (meska), water, and a small quantity of oil, 'in order to strengthen its skin.' (Westermarck, 1924 vol.2:383)

The repetition of henna rubbing over several days was also reported by Hardy and Brunot (in Vonderheyden, 1934aa:51). Among the Ait Warain, "the body of the baby is rubbed with oil or, in default of it, with fresh butter, and is painted with henna all over, 'to prevent its catching cold'" (Westermarck, 1924 vol.2:383). In another group, the Ait Sadden, henna powder was sprinkled on the armpits and groin of babies to reduce perspiration and sudden chills, while the Ait Waryagar applied henna to the top of babies' heads to "make the head strong" (Westermarck, 1924 vol.2:384). Henna was also sprinkled on newborns' armpits, navel, and genitals in the Loukkous region (Michaux-Bellaire and Salmon, 1906:233-234). In a similar fashion, henna rubbing was performed in neighboring Algeria as well. Dry henna was rubbed over the body, especially the joints and the eyebrows; henna mixed with pine bark and juniper leaves was rubbed between the thighs, in the armpits; henna mixed with oil was rubbed on the navel after the umbilical cord had fallen; and mixed with butter, henna was rubbed on the head (Vonderheyden, 1934a:51). Along with benzoin and a cowry shell, henna was incorporated into an amulet attached to the ankle (Vonderheyden, 1934a:51).

Writing in the early twentieth century, Emily, the Shariifa of Wazzan, described the same *ghmata* (wrapping) ritual performed by women in the low income urban neighbourhood where I lived from 2000 to 2001. Emily wrote,

> On the day of birth, khol is fully applied to the eyes, and the eyebrows marked with the same cosmetic. After the child has been well wiped, the little body is rubbed all over with a mixture of henna and oil, a linen cloth is rolled round, and after that a woolen one, a band across the forehead keeps a handkerchief over the head in place, which in turn passes under the chin (Wazan, 1912:17).[36]

The context of childbirth has changed since the time of these memoirs. Conception (and contraception), pregnancy, and childbirth are mediated by the medical profession. Poor women are likely to give birth by caesarean section, which allows

doctors to schedule births and reduce staff workload. During my fieldwork, ghmata was not described to me as a ritual that involved henna, but rather it involved applying kohl to the baby's eyes, and wrapping it in cotton cloths. However, Tauzin's study of henna in Mauritania describes the contemporary use of henna rubbing in birth rituals in that society, and suggests an emic interpretation of this practice. She writes,

> The body of the newborn is covered in a liquid preparation made from water, henna, and melted butter — this latter to ensure that the henna sticks to the skin. The baby remains thus an entire day, wrapped in a cloth. Such a practice aims to reinforce the infant's epidermis which, strengthened, serves as a barrier to the sicknesses that threaten him. (Tauzin, 1998:16-17, my translation)

This ritual deserves further attention, given the recent association of this practice with neonate deaths in other societies where infant henna rubbing is practiced, as described earlier in this chapter.

In Emily's time, people outside the household did not see the child until the name-giving ceremony, which took place eight days after birth. "The baby is invisible as a general rule, and not seen until the name-day," she wrote, even though the new mother was given a party and received friends the day after childbirth (Wazan 1912:16).

This period corresponds with an ethnographic note recorded by Daumas: seven days after birth, Algerian infants' hands were dabbed with henna, just as the hands of grandsons Hassan and Hussayn were hennaed by the Prophet (Daumas 1983 [1869]:476; see also Vonderheyden, 1934a:51). Westermarck similarly states,

> Among the Ait Yusi it is on the seventh day smeared with some gravy of the slaughtered animal before salt is added to it, mixed with henna and the milk of its mother, and subsequently, from time to time, with a mixture of such milk and henna ... (Westermarck, 1924 vol.2:386)

While the slaughter and consumption of a sheep or goat (known as the slaughter or sacrifice of the name-giving, *dbehet s-smiya* or *l-gezra de t-tesmiya*) is the most prominent

aspect of the name-giving ceremony, henna application to the entire body or to parts, especially the head, navel, feet, and finger-nails, was a frequent feature (eg Westermarck, 1924 vol.2:389).

There are explicit indications that henna applied on and around birth is associated with warding off supernatural harm. Bel reports that, for 33 days following the name-giving, the people of Tlemcen (in Algeria) put the child on a mattress in a corner, where the midwife had lit a green candle and made seven dots of henna on the wall above his head so that *jnun* (friendly and unfriendly supernatural beings) that live in the house would grow accustomed to the child's presence (in Vonderheyden, 1934a:51-52).

Among the Ait Sadden, the naming ceremony joined henna and blood in a second ritual: the midwife used a razor to make cuts on the child's chests, and rubbed henna into the wounds. Westermarck noted that, in this community, "very frequently, however, the sacrifice of an animal is omitted when a child is named; indeed in the case of a girl such a sacrifice is quite an exception, and there is no fear that the child will die in consequence" (Westermarck, 1924 vol.2:393). The cutting of the child, and the rubbing of henna in the wounds, was also recorded among the Ulad Bu'aziz, who similarly did not sacrifice an animal at the ceremony (Westermarck, 1924 vol.2:396). The blood of the child is equivalent to the blood of the sacrifice.

Circumcision

Traditionally part of the infant's first rituals, the wrapping and the subsequent naming, henna continues to be applied to children on different occasions. Most frequent is the application of a large dot (called *qamar*, or "moon") to the hands of both boys and girls for pleasure when women are applying henna to themselves. The ritual function of

henna, however, reappears at circumcision, which is universally practiced on Muslim boys in Morocco. Abdelkebir Khatibi's account of circumcision highlights the transformative and instrumental role of henna in this ritual:

> Through circumcision, I attained recognition, hairless virility. My mother put henna on my hand, that pale yellow red that is never transgressed. Be a man! Be a woman! (Khatibi, 1971:30, my translation)

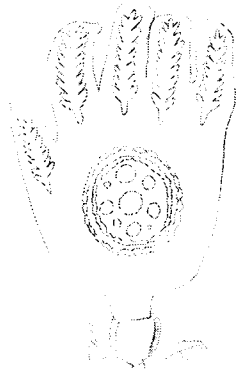
Male circumcision is an ancient practice associated with Mediterranean populations. Circumcision appears in Exodus (4:24-25), following God's instruction to Moses to tell Pharoah that his firstborn son would be killed if the Israelites are not freed:

> At a lodging place on the way, the Lord met Moses and was about to kill him. But Zipporah took a flint knife, cut off her son's foreskin and touched Moses' feet with it. "Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me," she said. So the Lord let him alone. (At that time she said "bridegroom of blood," referring to circumcision.)

Circumsion became a sign of membership in the community of believers, and the association between circumcision and marriage persists, as indicated in the ethnographic accounts below. Herodotus, who visited Egypt in the fifth century BC, noted that circumcision was practiced there, and hypothesized that it was invented either by the Egyptians themselves, or by the Ethiopians. Circumcision is not mentioned in the Qur'an, but became closely associated with Islam because of its prevalence among the first populations to adopt Muhammad's message (Smith, 1903).[37] Similar to henna use, circumcision spread with the cultural complex that was associated with Islam, and is now practiced by Muslim communities around the world. In some of these cultures (such as Turkey and south-east Asia), its name is derived from the Arabic word *sunnah*, which means "custom." Sunnah is often used specifically to mean the custom of the Prophet, considered by Muslims as a source of law as well as a guide to living.[38]

In Morocco, the ritual of male circumcision is called *tahara*, or purification. Tahara generally takes place in contemporary Moroccan society between the ages of four and seven,[39] and is accompanied by a lavish celebration.[40] Westermarck gives detailed descriptions of early twentieth century circumcision rituals in Fez, Tangiers, and Andjra, and among the people of Ulad Bu'aziz (Westermarck, 1924 vol.2:417-433). Henna was applied to the hands and feet of the young boy the night before the circumcision. (The Ulad Bu'aziz said that the circumcised child's henna must be applied by a woman who is not his mother, although in Fez it was the mother who applied it.) He was dressed in fine clothes,[41] and led on a mule through the neighborhood streets, often to a shrine where the circumcision was performed. In Andjra, powdered henna was applied to stop the flow of blood from the amputated foreskin. Charms were attached to the boy's right ankle and right wrist to promote healing and to protect against the evil eye. The charms included salt, silver, alum, and other items, but not henna. Westermarck notes that in Fez, the child was then wrapped in a white sheet, and carried back to the house, while women trilled the *zgharit*, the joyous sound that accompanies birth and marriage as well.

Figure 1.1: Khamisa



This small embroidered khmisa was made of leather. The designs on the palm and fingers suggest an association with hennaed hands that is apparent in many Moroccan khmissat.

From the collection of John Shoup, Al-Akhawayn University. Drawing by Stephanie Weirathmueller.

Henna also appeared in other guises in this ceremony. In Azzemmour, the foreskin was cut over a bowl containing henna and boiled eggs (Lecoeur, 1931:136). In

Algiers, the father dipped his fingers in henna, and made five fingerprints on the back of the child, or on the hem of his garment (Vonderheyden, 1934a:53). The five fingers create a *khamsa* ("five"), the protective symbolic hand. (For more on the *khamsa* and hand iconography in North Africa, see Westermarck, 1904; Laoust, 1920; Herber, 1927; and Champault and Verbrugge, 1965.) Known as the hand of Fatima in English (and similarly, *la main de Fathma* in French) this connotation is inexistent in Arabic. The literal meaning of khamsa, "five," or *khamisa*, "little five, is apparent in the diversity of objects that are called *khmisaat*. Many are hand-like in shape, while others have five elements, and are hand-like only by extension. Contemporary Moroccan khmisaat are often decorated to resemble hennaed hands.

Then as now, circumcision is accompanied by a celebration attended by neighbors and family. While the circumcision feast necessarily involves meat consumption and hence the slaughter of sheep, goat, fowl, or beef, there is no momentous ritual slaughter similar to the name-giving sacrifice. The symbolic blood here is the boy's, framed by henna as it was at birth.

Henna use during circumcision is not limited to Morocco, and I suspect that further study would reveal that this practice appears regularly in societies where henna is used extensively in wedding ceremonies. Details from a description of male circumcision in Egyptian Nubia highlight the role of henna, which is applied at several times during the ceremony.[42] As in Morocco, the Nubian circumcision is celebrated with as much circumstance as possible, and is described locally as a "wedding." (Here and elsewhere is evidence that the sacrifices of the foreskin and of the hymen are equivalent. See also Bouhdiba, 1998:186.) Following the announcement of the event, the killing of the cow that will provide the feast, and a day spent in dancing and celebration, the young boy

(called the *ariis*, or groom) is bathed and dressed in gold necklaces belonging to his mother and grandmother. His hands and feet are decorated with henna, as a bride's would be, and kohl is applied to his eyes. A woman's veil is drawn over his head. The guests present gifts to the family — coins, or previously, dates, sugar, wheat, and dhurra (*Sorghum vulgare,* also called Indian millet). The boy sits between his parents on a mat, where a plate of henna has been placed in front of his mother. A bowl of water is placed before the child.

> The ritual commenced with the mother sticking a lump of henna to the boy's forehead. The father affixed a gold coin in this henna, preferably a gold pound. The boy then sat quietly as more *nokout* was presented by the guests; the name of each donor was again loudly proclaimed to the gathering. (Kennedy, 1970:78)

Westermarck mentions that, in Fez, guests presented coins following the circumcision to both the musicians and to the circumcised boy by affixing the coin gifts to the recipient's head. (Among the Ulad Bu'aziz the coins were dropped into a tray and had no association with henna.) The Nubian ceremony continues:

> After this, water from the bowl was used to remove the henna from his forehead, and the mother's sister or some elder female relative came forward to hold him for the knife. As he chanted the powerful Muslim incantation — 'In the name of Allah, the compassionate, the merciful' — the 'barber' severed the foreskin. (Kennedy, 1970:78)

Engagement

Marriage is the third critical transition at which henna is applied ritually. Engagement is the first of several stages that are marked by henna application. Vonderheyden mentions the existence of a supernatural being, the bride thief (*khaattaf l-'araais*), who threatens to steal newly married women (Vonderheyden, 1934a:55). Henna, which protects from named and unnamed dangers, is applied prophylactically.

Henna application is also one of many body practices that aim to produce the young girl as a woman who corresponds to accepted models of the female body that are described as female beauty (ben Tanfous, 1977:39). She must demonstrate and master the four colors to color her eyes, hair, and skin: black, reddish brown, white, and red. Black, obtained from kohl, harqus, and gall, is for the eyes, hair, and skin; reddish brown, from henna, is for the hair and skin; white, from a cosmetic called *baruuq*, for the skin; while red, from carmine, is for the cheeks and lips. While the young girl begins to undergo body treatments once she has reached marriageable age, her new status is announced to the community "as she leaves her parents house decorated with henna and harqus" (ben Tanfous, 1977:39, my translation).

Eugene Aubin described the henna that is associated with engagement as a simple signal of the event. Once the terms of the marriage contract have been agreed upon, the groom "sends a negress to the house of his betrothed with tapers, dates and milk, and henna is smeared on the girl's hands and feet, in public token of his betrothal" (Aubin, 1906:257). A celebration of the engagement follows, with a second henna application. This henna ritual is distinguished from the specialists' "delicate task" of applying the "great henna" for the wedding (Aubin, 1912:259), allowing us to presume that engagement henna is either solid or a combination simply drawn forms such as bands on the fingers, or a pattern of large and small circles on the palm. The application of either style could be described as "smearing."

Wrapping the bride

The henna ceremony that takes place before the wedding symbolically strengthens and protects her body. Before her wedding, the young woman who is preparing for her first marriage undergoes a ritual that prepares her body for what

follows. Until her first marriage, she is called *bint*, a girl. After she has had sexual intercourse in marriage, she will call herself *mraa*, a woman. During the week preceding the wedding, the bride undertakes a regimen of body care that sets her apart from other women, and sets this time apart from other times. Describing urban practices, Eugene Aubin writes,

> Whilst the conjugal apartment is being set in order, the girl, on her side, prepares herself for the great occasion. She bathes every day, for custom requires her to take seven baths before entering the house of the bridegroom. (Aubin, 1912:259)

Among the Berber Zemmour, the bride's preparations began as she was washed by female specialists, who applied henna to her body as well as to her hands and feet (Querleux, 1915:16). Emily of Wazzan describes the wrapping of the bride in a white sheet, in which she was carried to the *hammam*, or public bath.[43] This marks the first day of the wedding:

> A strong negress enters the bride-elect's chamber and approaches the bed, where she is hidden behind a curtain and wrapped in a large white sheet. The negress bends her back, and the bride is hoisted on, amid "zahrits," benedictions, native music and burning of incense. Each guest carries a lighted candle in her hand ... The negress deposits her burden at the bathroom door, and the bathwomen take the precious burden in charge. From one and a half to two hours the purifying process goes on, and in the meantime the assembled guests are entertained with music and tea-drinking. When the bath is terminated, the procession is reformed and the bride deposited on a bed, generally in another room on the ground floor, if there is a room suitable. After an hour or two of repose, and in the early hours of the morning, say, between 1 a.m. and 3 a.m., the guests again reassembled in the bride's chamber to see her anointed with henna ... No fete is complete unless the hands and feet are henna-stained. (Wazan, 1912:125-126)

The bride is again wrapped in a sheet and remains secluded with her friends, still wrapped, until midnight of the third day of the wedding when henna is again applied at midnight (Wazan, 1912:128). The ritual of wrapping the bride has persisted to some extent. One evening, as an older woman described it to me, her daughters and daughters-

in-law, all in their 30s, listened and said that they had never heard of it before. Similarly, it forms part of the traditional wedding ceremony described by Deborah Kapchan's informant, who noted that it is "still enacted in the countryside but hardly ever in the cities any more" (Kapchan, 1996:154).

It is symbolic that brides are wrapped/shrouded in a sheet, and that this sheet is white, as is the clothing worn throughout the wedding ceremonies during the period described by Emily (Wazan, 1912:127, 133).[44] The ethnographic record tells us that a white sheet is worn as well by babies, newly circumcised boys, mourners, pilgrims, and the dead.

The henna thieves

The henna thieves are described by Vonderheyden as well-known in the Algerian south. They were incorporated in a ritual that took place a week before the wedding. Accompanied by young girls still of age to play in the streets, the bride dressed in rags and ran from house to house in a final moment of childhood freedom. At each house, they were received by the neighbours who rubbed the girls' hands and feet with henna. (Vonderheyden, 1934a:56)

L-hinna

The most significant henna ceremony associated with marriage is called *nhar l-hinna*, the day of henna. Drawing on Mary Douglas's (1966) insight into the danger of things that fall outside or move between categories, Deborah Kapchan contends that this application of henna serves to neutralize the danger that accompanies the transition from girl to woman, from sexual abstinence to sexual activity (Kapchan, 1996). Here, the

danger is not phrased in terms of individual risk, but rather risk to the community of *fitnah*, disorder. Transition must be orderly and mediated.

Traditionally, as now, bridal henna is applied late at night, two days before the consummation of the marriage.[45] A party of friends and relatives, along with several female musicians, accompanies the bride to the baths. The musicians (*shiikhat*) sing praises to the bride and to the Prophet, giving the henna ritual the imprimatur of religious tradition. Le Tourneau mentions that, in Fez in the early 1900s, the hammam workers received, along with the coins from the bathers, the garment worn by the bride to the bathhouse, as she should never wear it again (Le Tourneau, 1965:203). Upon returning to the house, the bride's hands and feet are traced with designs that resemble Fassi embroidery motifs (Le Tourneau, 1965:204, my translation).

Lecoeur describes a henna ceremony that was celebrated in Azzemour the night before the wedding. Attended only by female relatives, the bride was seated on a horse's saddle, and wore a sword at her side. Henna was applied to her hands and feet (Lecoeur, 1933:141-142).

Vonderheyden describes a typical nhar l-hinna in Algeria:

> The assembled women, who until the end alternate *you-yous* with sacred songs, seat the bride (sometimes draped in a red cloak) on a pillow, or on a mattress, in the most attractive room, her head turned toward the wall to avoid the evil eye.
>
> While the bride's hair and makeup are taken care of, a woman has ground henna leaves with a mortar and pestle, slowly and while singing. The powder is then brought in a bowl, on a tray, and kneaded with hot water, still accompanied by song. The toilette continues, long and meticulous.
>
> Finally, quite late at night, between midnight and four, the artisan gets up. ... Most often, the feet and hands are completely covered with henna, to the ankles and to the wrists, or even as far as mid-calf, or just below the knee, and up to the elbows, but there are a thousand extravagant methods to embellish the paint, extravagances which not all jurists consider legitimate.

> ... During the entire process, musicians sing and play sacred rhythms on the tambourine. At times, the music stops, and the artisan sings the beginning stanzas, "In the name of God, we damn the devil. ... Hold your hand out from your sleeve, today the great day has come, hold your hand, we will put henna on you, oh bride, be quiet, your mother is crying" ... In Tangiers, it is seven old women who sing ... "Put henna on the lady on the pillows, so that I can have children from her. Put henna on the lady on the carpet, so that I will have as a son a pasha or a qadi."(Vonderheyden, 1934a:57-58, my translation)

Houcein Kaci has provided a detailed description of engagement and marriage rituals in Bahlil, a village south of Fez where the houses are distinctively carved into the mountains (as in southern Spain). Henna was applied to both bride and groom on the evening of the second day of the wedding celebration (Kaci, 1921). The bride was hidden from her guests by a sheet. She remained silent and still while the henna was applied, and later while an old woman sang praises to her beauty. The guests placed coins on a tray in front of her.

Daumas describes the co-appearance of henna and coins in an Algerian wedding as well: gold coins were placed in the bride's hands, silver coins on her feet, and a gold ring on her forehead. These jewels were affixed with henna paste (Daumas, 1912:39).

Edward Lane's description of Muslim wedding rituals in Egypt, originally published in 1860, describes a very similar practice. The night of henna (*laylat l-hinna*) marked by a festive meal and music followed the visit of the bride and her family and friends to the hammam. As in Morocco, it took place the night before the marriage was consummated. Lane writes,

> A large quantity of henna having been prepared, mixed into a paste, the bride takes a lump of it in her hand, and receives contributions (called "nukoot") from her guests: each of them sticks a coin (usually of gold) in the henna which she holds upon her hand; and when the lump is closely stuck with these coins, she scrapes it off her hand upon the edge of a basin of water. Having collected in this manner from all her guests, some more henna is applied to her hands and feet, which are then bound with pieces of linen; and in this state they remain until the next morning, when

> they are found to be sufficiently dyed with its deep orange-red tint. Her guests make use of the remainer of the dye for their own hands. This night is called "Leylet el-Henna," or "the Night of the Henna." (Lane, 1908 [1860]:172)

Egyptian Copts similarly incorporated henna in their wedding rituals (Lane 1908:550).

While Lane gives no indication that nineteenth Egyptian weddings included henna rites for men, there is substantial evidence for this in Morocco. Houcein Kaci describes a henna ritual for the Moroccan Bahlili groom that took place separately the evening before the consummation (Kaci, 1921). It mirrors the bride's in many aspects. He was seated in a grotto, with the hood of his jellaba covering his face. His friends surround him in a semi-circle, while the vizir covered the groom's hands with henna and wrapped them in a cloth belonging to the bride. The wedding took place the following day.

Figure 2.2: Nqqaasha and bride

A nqqaasha (henna artisan) removes henna from a bride's hands, using rose water and fresh marjoram. The bride, the artisan, and the embroidered decorative pillow under the bride's feet are green, the color of fresh henna that is strongly associated with Islam.

Drawing by Stephanie Weirathmuller, after photograph by author.

In urban communities throughout North Africa at the beginning of the twentieth century, men dipped just the tip of the little finger into a bowl of henna held by one of their male attendants. In rural Morocco, however, Berber grooms, like brides, performed two henna rituals (the "big henna" and the "small henna") (Vonderheyden, 1934b:179-180). Meakin describes male henna rituals in Morocco as well. Male guests plunged their hands into bowl of henna containing two unbroken eggs. They contributed money toward the groom's substantial wedding expenses, but also pulled out coins which they kept. This reciprocity is repeated in another practice in which wedding guests took away slippers and brought them back full of raisins. (Meakin, 1906:372)

Gifts

The groom's involvement in henna rituals accompanying his wedding includes providing henna as one of the wedding gifts. During the engagement, the fiancé traditionally offered henna to his future bride on many occasions, including the offer of marriage, the announcement of the engagement, the wedding celebrations, and all religious holidays that occurred in the meantime. While a lavish betrothal gift may have included many gold and silver ornaments, much grain, oil, butter, honey, and cloth, and even household furniture and appliances in addition to several measures of fine quality henna, the poorest would suffice with henna, some oil and dates, and a small goat or sheep. [46]

Westermarck's notes from the early 1900s record, for instance, that among the Ulad Bu-Aziz of Morocco, henna (along with a few dates) was distributed to those who attended the presentation of gifts from the groom's family to the bride and her family (Westermarck 1914:83). Similarly, grooms from the Ait Tameldu accompanied the proposal by a gift of silver, dates, and henna (Westermarck 1914:83).

Wedding gifts were intended to defray the cost of the celebration and of setting up housekeeping afterward. The goat or sheep would be slaughtered and roasted, and the butter, honey, dates, and oil used in the preparation of the feast. The henna was also an important element. Where henna was not locally produced, it was traditionally costly and precious. In Morocco today, however, the ground powder has more symbolic than monetary value. During my fieldwork, women told me that the henna received as a wedding gift from the groom is not used during the ceremonies. Instead, it is repacked in decorative bags and distributed to the closest friends of the bride. This henna is not used by the recipients either, but is kept by them as a souvenir that symbolizes the women's friendship. Advertisements for henna bags now appear in some women's magazines alongside publicity for reception halls and other newly commercialized wedding services.

The belt, the forty

Rituals that follow the wedding demonstrate the gradual integration of the bride into her new role as wife and in-law.[47] For a specified period following the consummation, brides are subject to a number of taboos, the most important of which is the avoidance of clothing that girdles the waist, and particularly the avoidance of any form of belt (*l-hzam*). Wearing a belt during this period is associated with the danger of marital problems, including infertility (Sethom, 1969:20). This reintegration of the bride into the community following this period of seclusion and adjustment to married life is marked by henna application.

In Bahlil, the bride remained in bed for seven days, seen and cared for only by her mother, while her new husband visited late each night. When the bride left her bed on the seventh day, she was attended by her mother and several other older women who washed her, dyed her eyelashes and eyebrows, and painted her hands with henna. The

bride then put on her wedding clothes and the jewels she received from her parents, and, leaving the room, was welcomed into the community as a bride by music and zagharit (Kaci, 1921).

Although post-wedding henna is less widely described than the public henna application prior to the wedding, Kaci's description of henna application following Bahlili weddings finds parallels in the literature. Budgett Meakin, describing the northern part of Morocco some decades earlier, recorded that henna was applied again on the fourth day following the wedding. On the fifth day, guests came to see bride put on the belt, which was not worn during the period of seclusion following the consummation (Meakin, 1902:374). Similarly, Emily of Wazan describes how henna was reapplied to the bride on the third and tenth days following her wedding. On the twelfth day, the bride again put on her belt. (Wazan, 1912:137)

Forty days after the marriage, the bride's family invited the new couple to visit. The parents offer a festive meal, and bring a nqqaasha to their home to decorate the hands and feet of the bride. In the community where I did my fieldwork, this celebration is called *l-arba'iin*, "the forty [days]." Several families in my neighborhood welcomed newly-married daughters in this way forty days after the wedding. The brief return to her family reaffirms their continued social support of the married daughter, and demonstrates the effectiveness of potential aid in case of marital difficulties. Meakin describes the fortieth day following the wedding as the last public presentation of the bride, including public henna "for the last time" (Meakin, 1906:374).

A text published in 1946 describes a practice among families in Fez and Rabat. In these urban areas, young wives did not leave the conjugal home for a year after their marriages, in order to demonstrate their loyalty to their new family (Pesle 1946:233).

However, in this case as well, the bride's first visit after the wedding was to her mother. In Bahlil, by contrast, brides left the conjugal home five months after the marriage and returned only after a year had passed (Kaci, 1921).

Pregnancy and childbirth

Pregnant women are accorded special consideration. Lecoeur notes that, in an argument, an expectant mother may announce her state, saying "I am between two souls," thus ending the argument; similarly any mark on the newborn may be interpreted as the sign of its mother's unsatisfied hunger for something, such as henna or fruit (Lecoeur, 1931:129-130). This unusual status is recognized in the practices, many involving henna, that usher women through pregnancy and childbirth. In the area where I did my fieldwork, women applied henna to their hands and feet shortly before giving birth. While, in urban areas if not in rural communities, wedding henna employed complex decorative figures, birth henna was rubbed over the skin in a solid layer.

Henna is also associated with the body's recovery from birth. Westermarck records that, among the Ait Yusi, the umbilical cord was cut so that several inches remained at the navel; when this dropped off, it was preserved in salt butter and used as a treatment for eye diseases. The placenta and attached umbilical cord was

> thrown into a river or buried underneath the pole supporting the roof, together with the afterbirth (*timattin*), seven grains of barley, a piece of rock-salt, and a little henna. The blood of the mother must not be left exposed ...

Westermarck explains that should a woman who has given birth only to girls walk on the mother's blood, the new mother would subsequently give birth to as many girls as the number of toes that touched the blood (Westermarck 1926, vol. 2:372-373).

Westermarck also describes the existence of rituals surrounding the reintegration of the new mother into the community, known as the *nhar s-saba' de n-nfisa* (the seventh day of the new mother). In Andjra, on the seventh day, the midwife returned to the woman who had just given birth

> and removes her from the bed where she has been lying since the birth of the child, and puts her on the ground. She washes her, dresses her in clean clothes, and paints her hands and feet with henna. (Westermarck, 1924 vol.2:389)

Westermarck's descriptions of similar rituals ending the seven days of rest emphasize the use of water, henna, and new clothes (eg Westermarck, 1924 vol.2:391, 393, 396). Along with eggs and sugar, henna is also one of the traditional gifts presented on the occasion of a birth (Vonderheyden, 1934a:50).

In Morocco, the post-partum abstinence from sexual intercourse as well as prayer and work is nominally forty days. The end of this period is marked by ablutions, but there is no indication of ritual that approaches the bride-like adornment that follows the end of the initial seclusion after marriage. This suggests that henna is associated not with the return to sexual activity, but with passage through a life-giving/life-endangering period: first intercourse, and later, childbirth. It appears again several years later, as one of the substances rubbed on the nipple when a mother weaned a child from the breast (Vonderheyden, 1934a:52).[48]

Religious holidays and celebrations

Henna use corresponds not only with the life cycle of the individual, but also with the life of the community. Daumas mentions henna, kohl, and zerkoun (red vegetable dye used on the cheeks) as the cosmetics used by all women, rich and poor, on holidays (Daumas, 1912:15-16). Women and children apply henna on the evening prior

to the four major holidays of the Islamic year: 'Ashura, Muluud, 'Iid s-Sghiir, and 'Iid l-Kbiir. Vonderheyden records that in Tlemcen, the year's supply of henna was purchased at 'Ashura. In Mzab, henna was applied to the shoulder blade of the 'Iid l-Kbiir ram that was kept for this purpose, and placed under the bread bowl overnight; overnight, an angel was said to come and write the Ayat n-Nuur on the hennaed bone (Vonderheyden, 1934a:48). In some areas, a bit of henna was forced into the mouth of the ram sacrificed on 'Iid l-Kbir (Vonderheyden, 1934a:49). This practice, Vonderheyden suggests, had the effect of sanctifying all the henna of the house.

Aline Tauzin, in reference to henna practices in Mauritania, states,

> The desire to be closer to the divine and to distance oneself from demons figure into other special occasions on which women coat themselves with henna. It is thus on all religious holidays and during the two months that precede the month of ritual fasting, the month of Ramadan. *Hennet le-ksar itowwel le-'amaar*, that henna, says the rhymed formula, prolongs life. (Tauzin, 1998:18, my translation)

Other religious usages apply to specific populations. On the day of 'Arafat, for instance, wives and female kin of men who were performing the pilgrimage applied henna to their hands and feet, a practice known as the henna of the *hajjaj* (pilgrims) (Vonderheyden, 1934a:49). Vonderheyden records that henna was also applied, even by men, for the moussems, the annual religious celebrations that venerate particular saints (Vonderheyden, 1934a:49). Henna was also used in preparation for a shrine visit. Women either decorated their hands before visiting the saint, or brought along some henna to stick on the dome of the shrine (Vonderheyden, 1934a:49).[49]

Another religious occasion, one on which henna is used by men, is briefly mentioned by Aline Tauzin in her description of henna practices in Mauritania. She notes that henna serves to underline the separation of the sexes. While women make abundant use of henna for medicinal, recreational, and ritual purposes, men share fully

only in the medicinal use of henna. Men's ritual use of henna is restricted to two occasions, "at birth and during a ritual that marks the memorization of the Qur'an in its entirety" (Tauzin, 1998:16, my translation).[50] The association of henna with this achievement is such that the expression "he has put henna on his hand" signifies the memorization of the Qur'an (Tauzin, 1998:20-21). Tauzin writes,

> It is the right hand that is entirely covered, to the wrist, and done so two or three times. The color sought in this instance is very dark, closer to black than to red. After reciting the Holy Book before the assembled camp, the Quranic master and his student spit on the henna paste, which is ready. By their saliva, they transmit holy text to the henna-support, which will penetrate the body and transmit to it the text's power. Then, the women, on the command of the master, can spread it on the hand of the young man. (Tauzin, 1998:21, my translation)

Everyday body care

It would be a mistake to suggest that all henna application has a ritual function. Aside from its use in important life cycle events, henna is also applied in the home for the sake of recreation and adornment (eg Vonderheyden, 1934a:43). In a brief description of non-ritual henna practices, Vonderheyden writes,

> Among the idle women of urban society, the application of henna, even in the routine of everyday life, provides an opportunity for a little party. Friends are invited. In Fez, a *sheikha* [female musician] is called. It is an event. (Vonderheyden, 1934a:43)

Vonderheyden goes on to state that in Algiers, the use of henna outside of religious holidays was predominantly associated with young people, and it was largely frowned upon. He cites the example, from the town of Mzab (in Algeria), of a girl who was severely chastised by the washer of the dead (who served in this community as female Qur'an teacher) for having henna on her hands when it was not a festival (Vonderheyden, 1934a:44). Yet, an unnamed Arab poet, by contrast, counsels women to use kohl, henna, and *swak* (oak bark used to clean the teeth and to dye the lips and gums)

so that they will be more pleasing in the eyes of God, since they will more loved by their husbands (in Daumas, 1912:16).

Tauzin notes that Mauritanian women apply a mixture of henna and melted butter, often augmented by a bit of saffron, to the face and body in order to cleanse and brighten their skin (Tauzin, 1998:28-29). I observed this practice in Morocco, though its use was generally restricted to young children and adolescents. Rather than henna, adult women use *sabon bildii*, a soft dark soap made from ash and olive oil. Both henna and the henna and butter mixture mentioned by Tauzin are used in interactions that embody physical care between friends and family members, as one individual applies the substance, rubs it into the skin, and finally removes it from the other's body.

The use of henna as a hair conditioner and dye was noticed by the twentieth century ethnographers, who found it less interesting than its other use for skin dyeing. While skin dyeing was thought to have ritual function, hair dyeing was considered a simple aesthetic question. Nonetheless, some regularities have been reported.

Daumas and Westermarck provide evidence that suggests that the use of henna as a hair dye is moderated by life cycle rules, just as its use as a skin dye is. Before marriage, women's hair is dyed red with henna; after marriage, the henna is mixed with oak gall to produce a black dye (Daumas 1983 [1869]:476; Westermarck 1920). Oak gall, sulphide of antimony, copper pyrite, and oil are added to henna in another recipe for black hair dye (Vonderheyden, 1934a:42).

Vonderheyden remarks that a hot paste of henna was applied every six weeks, preferably on Monday or Friday, since the application of henna to the hair on other days would attact misfortune (Vonderheyden, 1934a:42). (I have found no corresponding weekday rule for skin application.) When used as a hair dye, henna paste is applied in the

hammam and left in the hair for several hours, or it may be applied at home and left overnight. In both cases, it is combed out in the hammam by an attendant ("une negresse," Vonderheyden, 1934a:42).

Henna is also used by men to dye their beards red, though this use was already uncommon at the time of Vonderheyden's observations (Vonderheyden, 1934a:42). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, white hair was disliked by the Prophet, who encouraged both men and women to dye their white hair (and men's beards) red with henna.

Mourning

Islamic tradition as exemplified in the hadith specifies well-determined periods of mourning. A widow, for instance, should mourn for four months and ten days (*Sahiih Bukhari* and *Sahiih Muslim*). She should remain secluded during this period, and should abstain from wearing coloured clothes, jewellery, and cosmetics, including henna and kohl. In practice, however, the period specified by legal tradition is often shorter than what is observed in the community, particularly in Morocco.

In Morocco, mourning invokes a number of taboos, both long term and short term. In the late nineteenth century, taboos of shorter duration included the prohibition preparing food and tea for three days following the death of a household member, which ranged from two days (Amanuz and Amizmiz) to seven (in Fez). Clothes were not washed or changed, and men did not shave their heads for periods ranging from seven days to several months. The Ait Sadden prohibited sexual intercourse for a period after the death of a household member; the entire village abstained from using henna, kohl, swak, and soap for seven days (Westermarck, 1924 vol.2:470-471). In mid-nineteenth century Algeria, the prohibition of henna along with bright colors, swak, kohl, jewelry,

and perfume accompanied the deep mourning of the first six months following the death of a close relative (Daumas, 1983 [1869]: 141). Failure to observe mourning taboos is a snub, as is suggested by a Moroccan proverb: "My husband's sister is a worm whose eyes will be plucked out by a chick! Bury her in the tomb, and I will pass by her decorated with henna" (El Attar, 1999:17, my translation).

Longer mourning taboos are observed by close female relatives. The Ulad Bu'aziz observed a variable mourning period of fifteen days to several months, in which mothers, grandmothers, daughters, and sisters

> refrain from washing and changing their clothes, from washing their faces (though they may wash their hands), from having matrimonial intercourse, and from using cosmetics. When the mourning is at an end women from other tents in the village come and wash the mourners and their clothes, paint the palms of their hands and the tops of their feet with henna, and smear their teeth with walnut root. (Westermarck, 1924 vol.2:471)

Similarly, among the Beni Sadden, a Berber group near Fez, widows did not wash or remove body hair during their period of mourning; at its end, however, "her relatives and friends bring her soap and henna" (Trenga, 1917:246, my translation).

During my fieldwork, two informants spoke of similar practices in their own families. Mothers widowed in the 1980s had refrained from washing their body or clothes during the period of primary mourning. At its end, they washed at the hammam alone (or with a single companion) late at night, then returned home and burned their mourning clothes. Finally, a companion dressed the widow in new clothes, carefully arranged her hair, and applied henna to her hands and feet. Yet there is no indication that the end of mourning is festive, despite the general use of henna at festive occasions. Rather, this ritual emphasizes the association of henna with passage from one phase to another, here, from mourning's preoccupation with death to everyday life again.

A final case indicates how clearly the use of henna signals the end of mourning to the community. In the case of a violent death that has been avenged through retribution, the period of mourning ends abruptly, regardless of how long mourning has been observed by the family. Westermarck writes,

> The family wash their clothes, the men have their heads shaved, the women paint themselves with henna, antimony, and walnut root and trill the zghariit, and the avenger of blood smears both his hands with henna to the wrists, and a feast is given to invited guests (Westermarck, 1924 vol.2:472).

While this too marks the passage from mourning to routine, by covering his hands in henna, the avenger also reaffirms the association of henna and blood that appears elsewhere, in the name-giving ceremony and in the circumcision.

Death

There is no contemporary evidence of henna used in conjunction with the rituals associated with death in Morocco, although ethnographic notes described its use on cadavers in the recent past in both Morocco and Algeria, and henna continues to be used immediately prior to death in nearby Mauritania.

Westermarck's notes tell us that the family of the dying person was expected to attend, though those who were ritually impure must not enter the room of the dying person (Westermarck, 1924 vol.2:434). The physical and psychological needs of the dying person were considered: the Quranic chapter Surat ur-R'd, known as the Sahliya (the one that eases) might be sung; while the Ait Waryagar offered honey and water "in order that he shall not die hungry and thirsty" (Westermarck, 1924 vol.2:435). Following death, the body is washed according to an established practice.

In many respects, the washing that prepares the body for burial first reproduces the ablution ritual that Muslims perform to cleanse themselves before prayer. The

washer begins by pronouncing her intention to perform ablutions for the dead person. She (if the deceased was a woman or a child) first carefully washes the genitalia with a towel, then, with the left hand, the mouth and nostrils, then both hands to the elbow (beginning with the right), the forehead, scalp, and ears, and then the feet (beginning with the right). Following this ablution, the washer performs the *ghasl l-miyit* (washing of the dead), by raising the body to a seated position, and washes the entire body in a prescribed manner, beginning with the head and the right side. The body's openings are closed with cotton, and then it is dressed in white cotton clothing. In Tangiers, incense or fragrant water (saffron and geranium) was used to scent the clothing before and after dressing the body, and flowers might be placed over the face.

The allusion of funerary rituals to marriage customs is extensive, and, during the early twentieth century, incorporated the use of henna. Trenga's description of funerary practices among the Beni Sadden suggests that the entire body was hennaed before washing and dressing (Trenga, 1917:238).[51] In contrast, Westermarck, describing the application of henna following the washing of the corpse, writes, "Unmarried persons, even little children, have their palms painted with henna; they are called *a'raays l-akhiira*, bridegrooms or brides of the other world" (Westermarck, 1924 vol.2:448).

Furthermore, as Westermarck notes, in many parts of Morocco, specialists were hired to trill the zagharit when the body is taken from the house: this was done for young unmarried or married woman (particularly one who is pregnant), while the funeral bier of an unmarried woman was decorated like an *'ammariya*, the enclosed sedan in which brides continue to be carried. For old men as well, considered possessors of baraka, the zagharit was trilled, as it was in some communities for unmarried men.

In Andjra, branches of myrtle, which resembles henna, were placed at the bottom of the grave, while in Tangiers, they were placed on the corpse's chest. In some communities in Algeria, henna powder was sprinkled over the corpse (Vonderheyden, 1934b:183). Following the burial, myrtle branches were placed on the grave on Fridays in many communities. The Ulad Bu'aziz rubbed the headstone with a paste made of henna and pounded carnations. On 'Ashura,[52] a Muslim holy day, the graves were watered, and, in Amzmiz, sprinkled with henna and myrtle branches. (Westermarck, 1924 vol.2:452-453, 480-481) ('Ashura continues to be one of the holidays on which Moroccan women and children decorate themselves with henna. In early twentieth century Tlemcen, henna bought on 'Ashura was considered special [Vonderheyden, 1934a:41].)

In Mauritania, which is geographically and culturally close to Morocco, henna continues to be applied to the hands of women as death approaches. Aline Tauzin links this usage to the application of henna to the hands of a pregnant woman before childbirth, a practice that is still current in Morocco:

> A pregnant woman, during the entire last month of her pregnancy, will color her hands and feet red, and thereby protect herself against the dangers that could afflict her. Until the end of seclusion, the period of 40 days that follows childbirth, the woman is, they say, "sitting on the edge of her grave". She is in danger of dying, and the henna protects her body against the attacks that might diminish her strength. In the same way, they dye the hands and feet of a woman if they fear that she may not survive an illness that afflicts her. Here, the henna — especially the nails dyed red — has the function of sparing the woman the flames the hell and permitting her to enter Paradise. (Tauzin, 1998:17-18, my translation)

Similarly, in reference to early twentieth-century Algeria, Vonderheyden briefly mentions the application of henna at the time of death.

> Women, sometimes men (but we are leaving aside purely Islamic tradition), when they feel death is approaching, have henna applied to their feet and to their hands. (Vonderheyden, 1934b:183, my translation)

Animals

Henna is occasionally applied to animals. In some instances, the use is medicinal. In the field, I often observed that harness sores of horses and mules, for instance, were covered in henna which dyes the surrounding hair. Sore joints are also sometimes treated with a henna plaster, just as arthritic joints in people are.

Other animals are dyed to indicate their special function. Lane records having seen camels stained with henna in the caravan that accompanied the covering of the Ka'aba to Mecca in the nineteenth century (Lane 1908:488-489).[53] While Daumas records that the sheep kept for children to play with are decorated with henna (Daumas 1983 [1869]:476), it is likely that this observation results from a misinterpretation: the 'Iid l-Kbiir ram, which is intended for sacrifice, is kept in the household for several days before the festival, during which time it is played with and cared for by the children.

Conclusion

Henna is part of the complex of practices and objects that are called upon for protection against evil, and is part of women's picture of self and spiritual world. It is intertwined with religious belief but not part of orthodox Islam that is taught in mosques. In this chapter, I have described how henna practices emerged from a Middle Eastern birthplace and diffused through a large culture area along with other aspects of Islamic culture, including the Arabic language. The plant also has a diffuse but explicit association with religion, demonstrated in hadith (canonic words and actions of the Prophet) and in Arabic proverbs.

The different contexts in which henna is (and has been) used in Morocco were described. There are several well-established overarching uses: medical, ritual, and

adornment. Medical and ritual uses intersect through the tradition of *tibb nabawi* — prophetic medicine. Adornment recalls ritual moments, and weaves them into the fabric of daily life. The ritual use of henna can be understood as magic, a practice that aims to reduce uncertainty, or as a marker of liminality, a practice that frames the movement of an individual through a dangerous passage from one life phase to another. Henna is deeply embedded in a local symbol system, and brings with it these connotations of religious tradition, danger, celebration, and change. I return to this analysis in the following chapter, and in Chapter 5.

The commoditization of henna involves potential changes in meaning as well as in form. Studies of commoditization in other contexts have revealed typical directions in technique, and both increased and decreased relevance to the local population as an aspect of local culture was integrated into the tourist system. This study will adopt a processual perspective, and examine the construction of henna practices and their signification through the lens of the artisans' daily lives. The following chapters reveal how the meanings of henna are transformed and moderated by technical adaptations (Chapter 3) and by the emerging structure of artisans' social relations (Chapter 4).

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[1] The chapter on henna in Henry Field's monograph *Body-Marking in Southwestern Asia* (1958) surveys the ethnographic and ethnobotanical literature for Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Nigeria, Sahara, Sudan, Egypt, Palestine/Israel, Syria, Jordan, the Arabian Peninsula, Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, India, and China. While its stated focus is the Middle East, it includes sections on henna traditions in Africa, including Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Sahara, and Nigeria. It is an unfortunate omission from Margarita Dobert's annotated bibliography on henna in Africa (Dobert, 1985). Field's discussion of body-marking includes tattooing, scarification, henna, and kohl.

[2] Benjamin Hoffstein notes, however, "in the West Indies where the plant has been naturalized, it is known as 'Jamaica Mignonette'" (cited in Field, 1958:96).

[3] The mistaken distinction between *Lawsonia inermis* (thornless), *Lawsonia alba* (white), and *Lawsonia spinosa* (thorny) reflects differences between immature and mature plant forms, rather than several distinct varieties (Aubaile-Sallenave, 1982; *cf* Field, 1958:95). Aubaile-Sallenave argues, however, that there are likely additional species or varieties of henna that are recognized by local users but not currently identified by botanical names.

[4] Scarone, 1939, gives very detailed information on henna growing practices in Morocco, as well as India, Egypt, and Iran. He notes that while henna is a woody shrub, outside of Morocco, where plants are maintained for up to 40 years, henna is typically treated as a long-lived herbaceous plant, in that plants are removed after four years. In Egypt, a practice of successive cropping is used: after removing henna plants, beans and barley are grown to rejuvenate the soil (Scarone, 1939:124). See also Quan, 2002, for a modern but briefer study of henna cultivation as a cash crop. Françoise Aubaile-Sallenave, 1982, discusses the global distribution of henna cultivation from an ethnobotanist's perspective. Humphrey-Newell, 1981, provides a detailed discussion of Egyptian agricultural publications relating to henna cultivation and processing. She notes that pruned henna branches are used for basket weaving, brooms, and kindling (Humphrey-Newell, 1981:4-5). Tauzin, 1998, offers an ethnographic discussion of henna cultivation in Mauritania mentioning the gender division of labour, as men plant while women harvest.

[5] The basic distinction is that dye molecules dissolve into a medium, while pigments are held in place mechanically (Christie, 2001:24). In the case of henna, the color fades (i.e. deteriorates) with time, and additionally is shed as the skin exfoliates.

[6] Henna is a protein dye, and is an effective dye for fibres of animal origin, including wool, silk, and animal leather in addition to skin. Keratin is the protein that is the main component in hair, skin, and fingernails. (Christie, 2001) Used with a mordant of alum and iron sulphate, henna gives a glossy blue black dye used in Europe, where it is called noir d'Afrique, African black (Scarone, 1939:137). Henna's popularity as a textile dye is, however, eclipsed by other natural dyes such as madder, cochineal, and murex (Sandberg, 1994; Chenciner, 2000). Essaouira, a port town on the Moroccan Atlantic coast, was historically a site where Phoenicians collected the molluscs that produce the purple murex dye. The oldest dyed linen fabric, however, is known to have been colored not with henna or madder, but with iron oxide (Chenciner, 2000:33). Linguistic evidence suggests that Moroccan Berbers, who use madder to dye wool, learned this technique from the Romans (Chenciner, 2000:216-217).

Vonderheyden reports that, because of its high cost, henna was not used as a dye-plant in Morocco, although cherished household objects were sometimes dyed (Vonderheyden, 1934a:41). One instance in which henna has typically been used as a textile colorant is for dyeing the wool used in the protective eye-like lozenges that have historically appeared on the back of men's outer garments in some rural areas (see Westermarck, 1904:220, fig. 38). Another well (and recently) documented case of henna dyeing that incorporates both decorative and ritual aspects is its use by the Shleuh Feija tribe of the Anti-Atlas (in southern Morocco, between Tiznit and Ouarzazate). Until the mid-twentieth century, Feija women decorated their woollen *haiks* (cloaks) with henna-painted motifs. While these motifs include stylized designs (with names such as "breadbasket" and "saw tooth") that appear on flat-weave carpets as well, others resemble the *tifinagh*, or Tamazight alphabet that also appears in Morocco's 5000 year old parietal carvings. Others haik images, such as mosque domes, crosses, and six-pointed stars are representational. Decorated headscarves used by Shorfa brides include a stylized full moon and two crescent moons. A haik identified as belonging to the *fqih* (religious scholar/ritual specialist) is painted with many figures resembling tifinagh letters. Deprived of their meaning, these letters are now associated with magical knowledge and power. (Karolnik-Andersch and Korolnik, 2002)

[7] Vonderheyden says that red is the color of joy and happiness for North Africans, while yellow is thought to attract sadness and unhappiness (Vonderheyden, 1934a:41). The symbolism of red in this respect is well established and is reflected in medieval Arabic philosophical texts on color as well (see Chenciner, 2000). Yellow, while it was certainly one of the undesirable colors for henna, was, however, never described to me as unhappy or unlucky, nor have I come across other supporting interpretations to this effect.

[8] It is interesting to note that this has been historically the case as well. Vonderheyden observes, "Morocco, despite its great consumption, is more or less self-sufficient" (1934:38). During this

period, henna was produced in the areas of Zaer, Doukkala, Azemmour, El Jadida (formerly called Mazagan), Tafilelt, and Touat, and sold in hundred-pound bales at specialized wholesale markets in the large cities. The henna suq in Fez continues today to house shops where henna and cosmetics are sold, although the bundles of henna leaves brought up from the south are no longer auctioned there.

[9] See Quan, 2002, for an analysis of current global imports and exports of henna by country. India is by far the largest global producer, though their exports are substantially reduced by a large domestic market.

[10] The long-use test should be regarded with scepticism. Kohl, another traditional cosmetic that has been long and widely used in Morocco, is toxic and particularly dangerous because the *merwed* (the instrument with which kohl is applied to the eyelids) is wetted in the mouth before application. Moroccan kohl may be antimony (Sb_2S_3) or, which is now more common, lead (Pb_2SO_4) (Bellakhdar, 1997:557). Contact with antimony dust is known to cause conjunctivitis, dermatitis, keratitis, and nasal septal ulceration (Budavari, 2001:117-119). In 1999, the rate of conjunctivitis was particularly high in Morocco, with 859 cases per 100,000 (Ministère de la Statistique, 2001:161). Lead, however, is a more serious danger. The effects of chronic lead poisoning, resulting from the ingestion of small quantities over a long period of time, may include weight loss, learning difficulties, behaviour problems, and mental retardation in children; and gastro-intestinal and central nervous system disorders in adults (Hodgson, Mailman, and Chambers, 1988; Rodricks, 1992; Smith, 1999:1737-1740; Budavari, 2001:5415). In one study, kohl available from Moroccan cosmetic boutiques ranged from 67 to 89 percent lead (Lekouch et al, 2001).

[11] The toxicity of PPD has been reported since 1967, with increased attention since the popularization of henna in the Western hemisphere in the past decade. Contact dermatitis and scarring is reported in Marcoux, Couture-Trudel and Riboulet-Delmas, 2002; and Neri, 2002. Systemic allergic responses to the application of PPD in henna paste have been reported in Abdallah and Davidson, 1996, and Ashraf, 1994. Muscle death and morbidity as a result of ingestion of PPD have been reported in Baud et al, 1984; and Averbukh et al, 1989.

[12] See Zinkham and Oski, 1996, for a discussion of *in vitro* tests on lawsone that demonstrate this effect. See also Soker et al, 2000, for additional reports of henna-induced hemolysis.

[13] This association between early human red ochre traditions and later henna practices was suggested in Humphrey-Newell, 1981:7-9. She notes that while the archaeological record supports our contention that red colorant ochre had a prominent cultural role in early human society, we may be misinterpreting the evidence: red ochre may simply be the most resistant.

[14] In contrast, Field, 1958; Chenciner, 1990, and others emphasize an imputed stable link between the color red and a variety of meanings including life, death, and blood. Edmund Leach urges us to consider this relationship as arbitrary, giving a variety of cross-cultural examples. What is significant and universal, he argues, is the (structuralist) distinction between color and not color (Leach, 1976:56-60).

[15] See Field, 1958:3-5, for a brief summary of pre-historic body-marking, including the use of ochre.

[16] Dobert, 1985, has provided references to Murray, 1949; Keimer, 1967; and Woening, 1971. These scholarly works briefly address the use of henna in Pharaonic Egypt. According to Dobert, Woening states that henna was used by Egyptians to dye the hands and fingernails of living people, and to dye the toenails and fingernails of mummies (Dobert, 1985:12).

[17] There is no evidence of henna being used to dye the hair in this period. Statues and images of men and women show hair and beards that have been blackened with bitumen, a disinfectant (Aubaile-Sallenave, 1982:133-134).

[18] Benjamin Hoffstein writes that the word henna "means 'to become queen'" (cited in Field, 1958:95). Field gives neither indication of the language of origin nor additional information. Hoffstein's assertion is not repeated in the literature.

[19] Dobert summarizes 45 sources, including some of the works mentioned elsewhere in this chapter. I include her references here for the convenience of the reader, as the 14-page photocopied manuscript, published by the National Museum of African Art Library at the Smithsonian Institution, is unfortunately not widely available. Dobert has noted that one author argues that Saharan nomads, followed by Hausa and Dyula traders, were responsible for the spread of henna throughout Niger (Bernolles, 1966), while others attribute the spread of henna to the Fulani (Harlan, 1976), and to Arabs (Leuzinger, 1950). Dobert also mentions ethnographic sources that briefly describe henna use in the Sudan (Brown and Massey, 1929), Central Africa (Caillie, 1968 [1830]), West Africa (Dalziel, 1937), Mauritania (Du Puigaudeau, 1937; Fisher, 1984), Gwandu (Hopen, 1958), Western Sahara (Monteil, 1953), and Nigeria (Oliver, 1960; Wilson-Haffenden and Rhodes, 1967; Negri, 1976).

A use of henna particular to sub-Saharan Africa is the production by the Sonrai of Tombouctou of jewellery from wax and straw that is dyed with henna to give the appearance of gold filigree (Lhote, 1946; Anon., 1951; Paulme, 1956). Other colorants used in dyeing straw jewellery include saffron, plant dyes that are purple (*somba,* from millet stems) and yellow (*komkom,* from a tree seed) dyes of plant origin, as well as mineral pigments that are red (*sibako tyirey,* from a stone that is imported from the Gold Coast) and green (*sibakou firdji,* from a soil that is imported from Guinea) in color. (Anon, 1951)

[20] See Herber, 1929, for a similar argument regarding the use of harquus in Morocco. Harquus is a dark pigment that, applied to the skin with a stick, wears off after several days.

[21] Henna use among Sephardic (Middle Eastern) Jews outside of North Africa has been described by Sered (1992) and Lowenstein (2000) among others. While Roth (2003:14) describes a medieval trade in henna in Sicily controlled by Jews of North African origin, there is no general indication of henna practices among European Jews. Sered contends that Jews of Kurdish background in contemporary Israel have tended to discard henna practices as they acculturate, noting that they are not part of "normative Jewish rituals" as understood in Israel (1992:132).

[22] The persecution of Jews in Spain and their refuge southward in Morocco began as early as 612-13, though the Spanish Inquisition more than eight hundred years later is often cited as the major impelling event. Periodic persecutions in Morocco also caused Jews to take refuge in Spain (as in 1146) and in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in Palestine (Slousch, 1905:230, 237-238). See Slousch, 1905, for a considered discussion of immigration of Jews to and from Morocco, Palestine, and Spain; and Slousch, 1906, for a detailed discussion of early Jewish communities in Morocco; Slousch, 1907, argues that Jews began to settle Africa with the Phonecians, and coexisted with Berbers with whom they intermarried. Goulven, 1927, provides a lengthy description of Jewish life in Rabat and Salé in the early twentieth century, illustrated by numerous drawings and photographs. While broad in scope, the description of customs lacks Tadjouri's attention to ethnographic detail and his dispassionate objectivity. Nonetheless, Goulven corroborates Tadjouri's description of both henna traditions and the Arab Sultan masquerade by the groom (Goulven, 1927:42-45). Ayache, 1987, examines the official protected minority (*dhimmi*) status of Jews in pre-colonial Morocco. This article contains the text of some official documents, but few other references. For more on the history of Jewish communities in Morocco, see Goldberg 1983, and particularly Kenbib, 1985 for a bibliographical essay on relations between Jews and Muslims. Kenbib is careful to distinguish between social groups within the Jewish community in terms of their relation to power. Lasry and Tapia, 1989, examine the Moroccan Jewish diaspora, with four articles on communities in Canada (Toronto, Montreal, and elsewhere in Quebec) in particular, in addition to studies of groups in the United States and in France. The focus is sociological rather than ethnographic.

[23] Meakin's description of Jewish weddings does not mention use of henna, though other bridal traditions (visit to bath, procession of bride to house of groom), are briefly described (Meakin, 1901:441-442).

[24] Tadjouri transliterates the Hebrew text as "Baroukh atta béboékha ou baroukh atta bésétekha" (Tadjouri, 1923:396). My translation is from the French.

[25] While many Moroccan Jews now speak French in daily life, Judeo-Arabic and, to a lesser extent, Berber have been the vernacular languages. See Goldberg, 1983.

[26] The video *Wedding Song,* directed and produced by Susan Slymovics and Amanda Dargan, depicts henna practices in the Pakistani immigrant community in New York. An illustrated interpretive booklet (Slymovics, n.d.) provides a detailed description, including lyrics of songs that are sung on these occasions by the families of the bride and groom. A description and analysis of the film can be found in Gorfain, Kapchan, and Young, 1996.

[27] Of course henna is not the only product applied to the body, nor the single one to have rich meaning. See Gorfain, Kapchan, and Young, 1996, for a description of the application of turmeric powder to the South Asian-American brides. Turmeric's yellow color is auspicious, and like henna, it lends its power to the one to whom it is applied. Deborah Kapchan suggests that as the guests rub the bride with turmeric they both differentiate her from the community and reaffirm her membership. Similarly, Young briefly describes the use, in Lamu, Kenya, of a paste made from tea leaves, sugar, water, and wheat flour. It is described as a "third kind of henna," along with true henna and PPD-adulterated black henna (Young, 1992:17).

[28] Though similar in some respects to the Christian *agrapha*, or sayings of Jesus that were recorded in early Christian writings but not part of the collection that emerged as the Bible, the hadith are much more significant than the agrapha to the extent that they are widely known by both scholars and by the general population. The hadith were codified between two and three hundred years after the Prophet's death in a process through which each account was individually submitted to rigorous examination of its chain of transmission.

[29] These standard collections are available in many editions. I have cited a searchable electronic full-text version available online at http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/reference/hadith.html.

[30] Cupping involved fixing a lit candle to the skin with clay or dough, and then placing a cup over it. When the flame burns the available oxygen and extinguishes, it creates a vacuum whose pressure bruises the skin. It continues to be practiced today. See Inhorn, 1994:176-178, for a detailed description of the use of cupping on the back and ovaries as a therapy for infertility; cupping is also used in the treatment of rheumatic and muscular pain.

[31] Arab medicine has been characterized by pluralism. The practices of pre-Islamic Arabia were codified and preserved as "prophetic medicine," the medical knowledge of the Prophet that was informed by his cultural background. For a discussion of prophetic medicine in the medieval Muslim community, see Burgel, 1976. Inhorn, 1994, discussed contemporary use of prophetic medicine in Egypt, with particular reference to its role in ethnogynecology and the treatment of infertility.

[32] Arabs acquired the principles of humoral medicine from Aristotle and Galen, whose Greek origin gave rise to the Arabic name *tibb yunani* (Greek medicine) as distinct from *tibb nabawi* (prophetic medicine). Arab humoral medicine relies on the maintenance of a balance of the body's humors, conceived as hot, cold, wet, and dry. This medical system was acquired and elaborated in the centuries following the prophet. The Classical Age of the Middle East and North Africa coincided with Europe's Dark Ages, and Arabic became the language of science. For a thorough discussion of medieval Arab medicine, see Burgel, 1976.

[33] Dale Eickelman writes that, because of the French state's twin desires to preserve Moroccan institutions and to implement modern, "scientific" colonial rule, the volumes produced by French administrators in Morocco "constitute one of the best collections of colonial ethnography found anywhere" (Eickelman, 2002:29). A similar desire to improve and rationalize French life in the metropolis itself is evident in Baron Haussmann's once (and perhaps still) controversial design for the modernization of Paris, which brought gas, sewers, and water to the city over a period of 15 years. See Carmona, 2002.

[34] Emily's biographer, Unity Hall, writes that, when signing the marriage contract, Emily misspelled her name. "She had confused French and English, signing herself La Cherifa d'Wazzan. It should have read La Cherifa d'Ouezzane" (Hall, 1971:12). (Ouezzane is the popular French form of the Arabic place name, while Wazzan is the English form. Emily's publisher used Wazan, however.) In fact, Emily's use of her husband's title and patronymic suggests her English upbringing rather than Moroccan tradition. Titles such as Sharif and Sharifa indicate membership in the prophetic kinship group and are not conferred by marriage. Nonetheless, her effort in introducing vaccines against smallpox eventually conferred a grace of her own. Hall records that in the 1970s, some thirty years after her death, Emily's grave in Ouezzane (Wazzan) was venerated by local women who tied bits of cloth to it "as petitions for a husband, a baby, more money, or a better life" (Hall, 1971:248).

[35]Vonderheyden warns against giving henna excessive importance, and remarks that other ritual substances and objects include powdered *harmel*, pine bark, salt, eggs, small round mirrors, and candles (Vonderheyden, 1934a:50). While in the field, a male neighbor told me that the cheap round mirrors I was buying as gifts were typically used by women for magic. Harmel, *Peganum harmala* or African rue, is also widely available from street vendors and has no contemporary use in Moroccan cuisine. It is used in protective charms and rituals. Contemporary practices that aim to manipulate the supernatural or draw on personalistic or supernatural causation in healing are described in Chlyeh, 1998 (with emphasis on the Gnawa tradition) and Akhmisse, 2000 (with reference to ethnobotany and traditional medicine).

[36] A second wrapping ceremony is described in a later passage (Wazan, 1912:68-69). It is identical to the first, but includes mention of a copper coin dipped in walnut juice and applied to the body several times.

[37] For an extensive analysis of circumcision in Islam, see Bouhdiba, 1998:174-187.

[38] For instance, while the Qur'an refers to three daily prayers (24:58 and 11:116), the sunnah describes the performance of five. It is this well established sunnah, of course, that has prevailed. The incorporation of prophetic speech and behavior into accepted law in the eighth century, and the progressive refinement of these sources, is described in the classic overviews of Islamic legal history. See, in this regard, Coulson, 1964; Schacht, 1964; MacDonald, 1965; and Hodgson, 1974.

[39] There is some variation. While, Leo Africanus recorded that, in Fez, boys were circumcised seven days after birth, during Westermarck's time, some communities circumcised boys at ages much younger than the norm. This was the practice among the Ait Waryagar, where boys were generally circumcised at one year, though occasionally at the age of several months (Westermarck, 1924 vol.2:417).

[40] Lecoeur, describing circumcision practices in Azzemmour, writes that circumcision might be organized and celebrated with a large party, or boys would be kidnapped (*mesruq*) by a relative or family friend, who had them circumcised without the parents' knowledge. Each family practiced one or the other tradition, although occasionally, out of economy, parents may arrange to switch to kidnapped circumcision (Lecoeur, 1931:134).

[41] Though in a Tangiers suburb, boys were disguised in female clothing (Vonderheyden, 1934a:52). This is coherent with the application of bridal henna to the circumcised boy.

[42] Henna is also applied during the parallel ritual of excision and infibulation in Egyptian Nubia. The copious Islamic legal texts on social and moral life have barely treated female circumcision; the removal of part of the clitoral hood is regarded as *makruma*, a non-obligatory pious practice. The ablation of the clitoris itself is explicitly prohibited in a hadith:

> One day the Prophet, seeing Umm 'Attya operate on a girl, said to her: "Circumcision is a sunna for men and only a makruma for girls. Just touch the surface lightly and don't cut deep." (Bouhdiba, 1998:175, 176)

No form of female circumcision is practiced in Morocco or elsewhere in North Africa (Bouhdiba, 1998:175). Kennedy's description of infibulation in Egyptian Nubia reveals, as expected, that henna is used.

> In the manner of a real bride, her eyes are made up with kohl, and her hands and feet are dyed with henna. The following morning, neighbourhood women gather at the house. With little fanfare or preparation, the midwife quickly performs the operation. As several women spread her legs, a bowl is placed beneath the girl to catch the blood and the clitoris, the labia minora and part of the labia majora are excised with a razor or knife. The women meanwhile chant 'Come you are now a woman.' 'You became a bride.' 'Bring her the groom now.' 'Bring her a penis, she is ready for intercourse', etc. These cries are interspersed with protective Koranic incantations, punctuated at intervals by cries of joy (zaghareet). According to some informants, this chanting and shouting serves partially to drown the screams of the child. Incense is kept burning during the operation to scare away the jinns and the evil eye. Raw egg and green henna are then applied, and the child's legs are tied together. (Kennedy, 1970:180)

The comparative simplicity of this ritual reveals henna dying as the essential physical act that prepares the individual.

[43] Vonderheyden records that Algerian brides and their entourage of family and friends visit the hammam several times in the week before the wedding (at the cost of the groom's father), applying some henna each time upon returning. (Vonderheyden, 1934a:56) The hammam is found in different forms throughout the Middle East, and continues to be popular in Morocco despite the increasing presence of household showers. For accounts of the bathing process in Morocco, see Peets, 1988; and, especially, Mernissi, 1994. Bathing in an Iranian hammam is described in an excerpt by Najmeh Najafi, reprinted in Pearson and Clark, 1987:54-57. A discussion of medieval theological views on the permissibility of women's use of the hammam can be found in Pesle, 1946:238 passim.

[44] Contemporary Moroccan brides dress in bright colors, especially red, turquoise, and emerald green. Urban wedding ceremonies highlight cosmopolitan images, in which the bride wears several — from three to seven — changes of dress, each a different color, and often depicting the bride in named regional and ethnic styles, including *fassi* (Fez), *shleuh* (Berber), and *hindi* (Indian). In many weddings, the final dress is a white Western-style gown. See Kapchan, 1996, for a discussion of the symbolism of contemporary wedding dress in Morocco.

[45] Vonderheyden states that the timing of this ritual gives the event a ghostly aura (Vonderheyden, 1934a:56). Nonetheless, this tradition is changing. During my fieldwork, two brides chose to have their wedding henna applied in late afternoon, for the convenience of friends who worked in formal sector jobs.

[46] Henna is a traditional gift at other occasions, as well; guests at naming ceremonies, for instance, may also bring henna, or a scarf, or a child's shirt (Westermarck, 1924 vol.2:395).

[47] In her study of bridal dress in North Africa, with particular reference to Tunsia, Samira Sethom (1969) argues that while ornamentation and fabric have demonstrated historical and regional differentiation, the taboo against belting the new bride has supported the preservation of a particular form of wide, loose tunic worn by Tunisian brides since the Roman era.

[48] Other substances applied to the breast during weaning include soot, tar, resin, coffee grounds, and gall (Vonderheyden, 1934a:52). Vonderheyden uses the term *fiel*, which means both gall and venom.

[49] Mostapha Akhmisse has described the ritual of visiting saints' tombs in Morocco (Akhmisse, 2000:35-37). The burial place is usually located near a tree, a grotto, a well, a spring, or a *khalwa*, a place where the saint had retreated to pray. When the tomb is located near a tree, well, or spring,

these natural elements (leaves, water) are incorporated into the ritual of pilgrimage, while grottos offer shelter to travelers or the homeless. The khalwa is used for the slaughter of animals necessary for the fulfillment of some vows, and for ritual possession dances. Inside the sanctuary is a small coal-fired pot (*kanuun*) for burning incense (*bkhuur*), effective against curses and evil eye. This incense is composed of *shibba* (alum), *jawi* (benjoin), *luuban* (incense), *qasbuur* (coriander), *'uud l-qamari* (aloe wood), *ambar* (amber), *kafor* (camphor). Akhmisse writes, "The visit to the marabout always unfolds according to the same rite. The patient circles the saint's tomb while repeating the following phrase, 'Protect me from evil, o saint of God"' (Akhmisse, 2000:36, my translation). The pilgrim must then buy a new green cloth for the saint's tomb if he is cured. Other rituals may also be integrated. If the tomb is located near the ocean, a well, a river, or a spring, then drinking or washing with this water might also have been incorporated into the ritual. Some shrines, such as Moulay Tahar in Casablanca for instance, contain pieces of chain for beating the body (Akhmisse, 2000:37). Mernissi, 1988, gives an interview with a Moroccan female psychic that incorporates much specific information on shrine practices, particularly relating to the recognition and initiation of individuals with supernatural gifts.

[50] Interestingly, henna use during circumcision is not mentioned.

[51] Literally, "le corps du mort est passé au henné" (Trenga, 1917:238).

[52] For Shi'ite Muslims, 'Ashura is a day of deep mourning that is associated with the murder of Husayn, the son of Ali and grandson of the Prophet. The day of Husayn's murder coincided with an optional fast day that had been observed by the Prophet, and continues to be observed by Sunni Muslims today (Glassé, 1989:52,162-163). In contemporary Morocco, the origins of the day are not known. It is a day of celebration. In many parts of Morocco, women and children buy small earthenware drums and play them in the streets, breaking them at the end of the evening.

[53] The cubic structure that is circumambulated by Muslims during the annual pilgrimage, the Ka'aba is the pole that determines the direction in which Muslims pray. Muslims believe that it was originally built by Adam, and rebuilt by venerated figures several times throughout its history. A new covering (*kiswah*) is manufactured for it each year in Egypt and brought to Mecca by Egyptian pilgrims.

3
Technical change, symbolic function, and the changing contexts of production

Introduction

While in many societies, tourism has generated the creation of replicas (and subsequent variations on them) of goods that are no longer used on a daily basis by residents, tourist sector henna artisans in Morocco are engaged in the production of a commodity that continues to have a vigorous local market. And so it was frequent for people with whom I discussed the tourist market henna artisans to almost immediately reply, "Ce ne sont pas des vraies nqaashas" [Those aren't real henna artisans] or "Ce n'est pas le vrai henné, ça" [That isn't real henna]. Kindly inviting me to his home where his wife was having henna applied the following day, one man told me, upon hearing of my research, "L-hinna l-haqiiqia ma kaynsh fi z-zanqa!" [There is no real henna in the street!] He made a fist, pointed his index finger, and moved his flexed arm emphatically up and down as he spoke.

Since my initial interest was business practices and social adaptation (see Kelly Spurles 2002), these comments didn't really trouble me. Whether or not the artisans or what they created were "real," these women were successfully drawing local art forms into the international and domestic tourist arenas where they could make reliably high profits which they were generally able to retain. Their daily presence in the market, the economic contributions they made to their households, and the interactions they had with dozens of tourists each day provided the artisan with assurance that they were engaging in something that had meaning, if not quite the meaning that others ascribed it.

Over time, I began to see both the significance and the impact of this struggle over interpretation even on women's control of their profits and their ability to maintain these small-scale businesses.

The reality of henna is its cultural significance, which comprises the historical usages described in the last chapter, the contemporary adaptations in use and technique described here, and the social relations in which production is embedded, as described in the next chapter. The meanings of cultural phenomena are like onions, with their enfolded concentric layers, or even leeks whose enfolded layers aren't impervious, but contain bits of the environment that have been incorporated during its growth. This image incorporates dynamism, embeddedness, and polysemy. Here I examine the construction of aesthetic, technical, and social norms of henna application in the local and tourist sectors, which forms the second layer of meaning in this leek-like practice. Drawing on the ethnographic data that was presented in Chapter 2 to give a wider context to my fieldnotes, I present a structured contrast between henna for local residents and for tourists that illustrates the most apparent and immediate basis for the characterization of tourist henna as "not real".

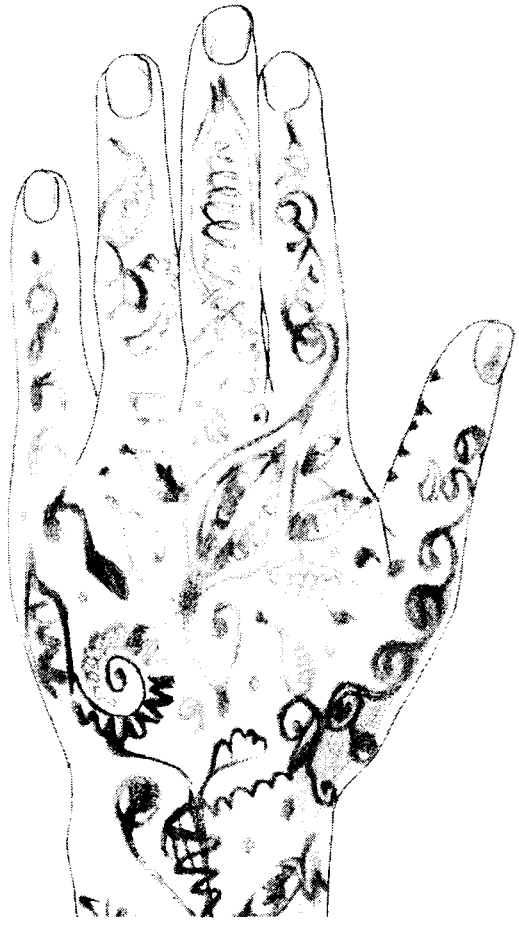
Debates regarding the authenticity and tradition of cultural forms, including objects produced for trade, often involve appraisal by outsider experts who see change as evidence of degradation, deterioration, importantly, of the breaking down of essential boundaries between cultural groups evident in the contested art form, as well as in other aspects of society (Spooner, 1986; Cohodas, 1999). These concerns underlie the critical comments, such as those cited in the first paragraph of this chapter, regarding the authenticity of henna produced for tourists that I heard from male merchants and, on several occasions, police officers.

The struggle over the authenticity and meaning of tourist henna and the artisans who create it gives meaning to the question of what other forms of henna mean for Moroccans. It also encourages us to question how Moroccans have responded to the inequalities made visible in access to tourism and to the profits it generates. And finally, it suggests that we consider how society has responded to changing female gender roles. These questions, however, begin with the simple statement that the aesthetic (and by implication technical) norms held by most Moroccans reveal tourist henna to be inauthentic. Indeed, as I later came to think, the fundamental object of criticisms of tourist henna is not the visual beauty of henna, but the social relations of tourism, and possibly the rapidly shifting international and national systems. Yet, in the field, as I talked about my research with the men who worked in the shops near where I lived and shopped, and as my interlocutors pronounced that tourist henna wasn't real, their eyes wandered to my hands. I will return, however, to this discussion of authenticity and conflict in Chapter 5.

Interactions with people I knew and didn't know tended to begin with an examination of my hands. My hands were often remarkable, and they changed daily in a way that was shocking to me, at first, until I became accustomed to the sudden manifestation of unfamiliar features in a part of my body whose appearance I had always taken for granted. These changes continued to interest others, however, for different reasons. As I sat with artisans, one would invariably take my hand (first right, then left) in hers, palm to palm, and begin to draw lines of henna on it. And so my hands provided a canvas (or an autograph book?) on which my relationships and my daily activities left traces in the form of temporary dyed patterns: sometimes complex geometric abstracts, sometimes dense vines and paisley leaves, sometimes rapid and awkward approximations

of flowers. For a while, my attempts were visible there too, mostly on my left hand and then on my right as well, until my skill had improved to the level where I was welcome and encouraged to practice on others.

Figure 3.1: Tourist sector khaliji design



This design was initially applied very quickly, and then elaborated over the course of a long conversation. The artisan began by drawing the outline of the large central leaf, and then continued the design down the index finger rapidly creating a finger pattern of scrolls and leaves, and drawing a few pointed arches and leaves around the central leaf motif. As we talked, she elaborated the design, filling in the remaining areas with scrolls, vines, and dots. While this design demonstrates knowledge of the basic principles of construction, there is little complexity, variation, and integration of the design elements. Note the predominance of vine and leaf shapes in this example of tourist henna, as well as the almost complete absence of doubled lines. It succeeds to a greater extent in creating the desirable density of elements. The drawing preserves the variation in tone of the original design that resulted from the artisan's use of henna borrowed from several different people. In this case, the artisan completed the design with henna prepared by a group-mate. These different batches were probably of varying degrees of freshness.

Drawing by S. Weirathmueller, after photograph by author.

The skill of the artisans and the care they had taken were judged by observers according to aesthetic standards that included fineness of line, beauty of pattern, but most of all, depth and quality of color. Over time, as each design faded, it might be redrawn by the same artisan or a different one; some designs were "made more beautiful" the next day, by someone else. Often, if I left one woman who had hennaed my hands, and went to visit another who was also an artisan, the second would pick off the dried crusts, saying that it had already dried enough. Yet no woman would allow me

to remove the bits of dried henna from a design she herself had done several hours earlier. The longer it stays, the better the color.

The care with which my primary informants drew lines of henna on my hands affected how I felt about the patterns; thus, despite my fondness for complex and difficult marrakshi geometrics, the designs that I loved best were the simple flowers done by the women with whom I spent the most time, discussing my marriage plans, and their grandchildren, babies, boyfriends, and divorces. When meeting people who weren't familiar with my research, I was protective of the designs on my hands. Sometimes, I acted pre-emptively, when I saw the beginning of a critical gaze, saying "Had nqiish ma shii shiiki bezzaf, u lakin hadi lli naqshaat lii aziiza 'aliya bezzaf" [This design is not very sophisticated, but the one who did it is dear to me].

The designs on my hands were clearly identified as from the tourist plaza or from a local sector nqqaasha. In this chapter, I show how these two groups of artisans, working in the tourist sector and the local sector respectively, maintained distinct technical and aesthetic traditions that were reinforced by separate training and apprenticeship practices. Different workplace conditions and customer bases further encouraged divergence between tourist and local sector technique and aesthetics. In this and the following chapters, I follow Appadurai (1986) and Spooner (1986) in examining an object's meaning through following its movement through the cycle of production, exchange, and consumption.

Preparing henna and filling syringes

A henna design is typically created by a single artist using a blunt-needled medical syringe filled with henna paste. These materials are easily obtained. The ease with which

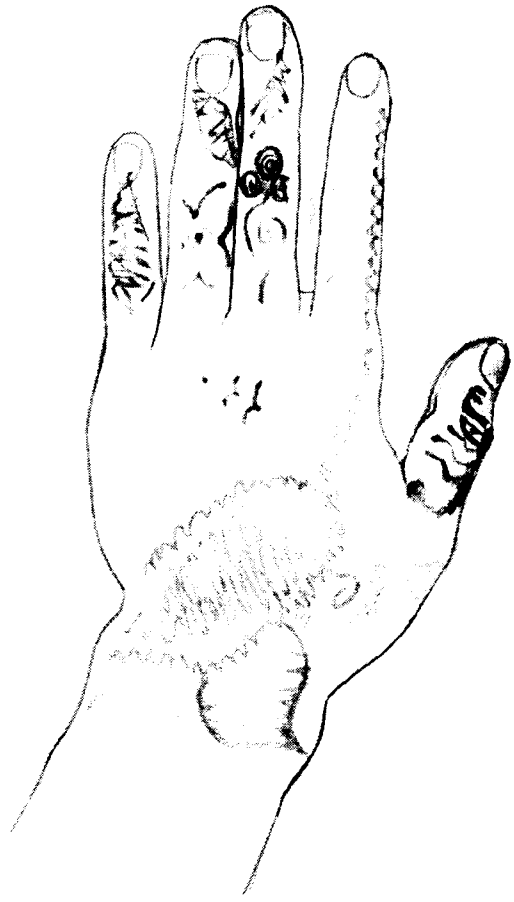
the required materials can be acquired is demonstrated by the extreme fluidity of the trade. In addition to a smaller core of artisans who work regularly, a great number of women move in and out of tourist sector henna production in response to factors such as personal financial circumstances, weather, and tourism conditions. Social constraints prevent local sector artisans, however, from even temporarily engaging in tourist sector work. These social aspects of production are discussed in Chapter 4.

Henna, the only material involved in the process that is both consumable and essential, is widely available in the city, and can be purchased in almost every neighborhood. Henna merchants in the souq do not extend credit, although neighborhood grocery stores, where boxed and bulk ground (as well as leaf) henna can also be purchased do extend credit to some customers. The artisans often purchase it in the nearby dried fruit and nut market, where it is sold in packed boxes and by weight.

Bulk henna is available in the form of ground powder and leaf. The sale of both bulk and packaged henna by dried fruit and nut (*fakiya*) sellers emphasizes henna's place as a locally-produced luxury consumable good. Additionally, like dried fruits and nuts, henna can be stored for a period of several months as long as it remains free from humidity.[1]

At 20 dirhams a kilogram rather than 18 dirhams per kilo of leaf henna, ground henna is more expensive. Some artisans purchase several dirhams' worth of powdered henna as needed, mixing the entire quantity at once. However, once ground henna is exposed to the moisture in air, it loses its potency. Hence, many artisans prefer to purchase henna in sealed packages, which cost twice as much as bulk henna, at 5 dirhams for only 125 grams. Those who purchase packaged henna say it is of better quality, and makes a darker dye.

Figure 3.2: Tourist sector khaliji design



This design displays many of the characteristics associated with tourist sector work: variation in color (due to the borrowing of paste from several sources), transformation of parallel lines into wide zigzags, and of zigzag borders into scallops, complete absence of doubled lines, minimal variation (especially evident in filled leaf forms), and low density overall. Note the scorpion motif on the thumb. The scorpion is not used in local sector henna.

This design is considered less pleasing than the one pictured in Figure 3.1.

Drawing by S. Weirathmueller, after photograph by author.

While ground henna, purchased in packages or in bulk, costs more than leaf henna, it requires less preparation. Women prepare leaf henna by first picking it over to remove small branches and stems, spreading it out on a sheet to dry further, and then grinding it with a mortar and pestle. Because the additional labor required to prepare leaf henna cannot be carried out at their work sites, artisans in the tourist sector purchase powdered henna instead. Drying, picking over, and grinding henna are activities that need time and space, and they cannot carried out when women are frequently disturbed by police. No domestic activities of this sort are carried out by the artisans during their long periods of inactivity between clients.

While some artisans prefer a single brand, others say that all henna is the same.

Boxed henna is packed in a stapled heavy-gage plastic bag inserted in a re-closable cardboard box. This is convenient, since extra henna can be easily stored. Favorite brands are said to be darker, fresher, or longer lasting; artisans identify brands by the picture on the box. One brand of henna features photographs of typical designs on the packaging. These photographs are sometimes ripped from discarded boxes and saved for reference or display. Henna-based black hair color containing chemical dye was introduced during my last months in the field, and was adopted by a few artisans, although in 2000 and 2001 it was not widely used.[2]

Local sector artisans mix the paste at the client's home immediately before using it. Describing henna techniques in the United Arab Emirates, Aida Kanafani notes that the paste is mixed (using the water in which a dried lime has been boiled) around noon and applied after the night prayers (*salat l-'isha*) (Kanafani, 1983:55). ('Isha in Abu Dhabi moves from just after 7 pm in mid-December to nearly 9 pm in mid-June, allowing the henna to rest for a period of seven to nine hours.) Similarly, some North American artisans recommend mixing the paste and allowing the dye to "develop" for several hours before using it (eg Weinburg, 1999:30; Roome, 1998:90). This technique is not used in Morocco, where local sector artisans mix henna in the presence of the one to whom it will be applied. The time between mixing and application is no more than several minutes.

In contrast, tourist sector artisans make one or two batches of paste during the day. Although some mix henna late at night for use the next day, the practice of using henna that has been mixed for use the previous day is frowned upon by tourist sector artisans. Some, upon seeing that a rival's henna pot was nearly empty early in the day, pointedly asked when the henna had been mixed.

Ground henna powder is emptied into a recipient, and then water and other desired ingredients are added.[3] Artisans in both the local and tourist sectors add paint thinner (*dilwan*, from *diluant* [Fr.]), which is said to make the dye more resistant to fading. Paint thinner is said to make the henna more "hot;" it is not added to henna that will be used on children or on brides. Paint thinner is purchased in 250 ml bottles and used sparingly, at a rate of one or one-half teaspoon to about 60 grams (half a package) of henna. It is obtained at hardware stores, which were found in every neighborhood. Tourist sector artisans obtain water from one of the orange juice sellers (who have buckets of water used for rinsing glasses), or bring it from home in a 250 ml plastic mineral water bottle, which they refill with tap water and reuse.

Some local sector artisans add other ingredients as well. Mint tea (Chinese gunpowder green tea prepared with quantities of fresh mint leaves and stems as well as a great deal of sugar) is commonly used in place of water in some areas. One artisan used ground cloves, and added that if there are henna seeds found with the leaves, then they can be ground up and added. Adding henna seeds makes the color darker, she said. Also referring to Moroccan henna practices, Abdelhai Diouri mentions both tea and ground cloves, and adds dried pulverized rose petals and orange water to the list of ingredients that are sometimes added to the paste (Diouri, 1997:144).

About ¾ cup of henna powder is prepared at a time, adding small amounts (one or two tablespoons) of water until a loose dough consistency is obtained. Room temperature water is used.[4] Measurements are always judged by the eye, and the paste's thickness and texture is determined by stirring with a metal spoon. It should be free of all lumps. Local sector artisans demonstrate the proper consistency by scooping some paste with the spoon, and then with a swift movement, flinging the paste from spoon

back into the bowl. It should come away easily from the spoon, but not run or drip. Some local sector artisans mix the paste with a spoon until the lumps are gone, and then knead it with the right hand in this manner, scooping it up and throwing it back into the bowl. This movement is performed for several minutes. Dough of various sorts is also prepared in this way, allowing wheat flour to develop its gluten during the brief kneading process.

Commercially milled Moroccan henna is very fine. It is not sifted before mixing with water to form a paste. However, local sector artisans often employ a final, additional step of spooning the henna paste into the toe of a nylon stocking, and squeezing the henna out through the nylon fabric. This removes most remaining large particles and lumps from the mixed paste, and reduces clogging of the hypodermic needle. (In experiments with commercially milled Indian henna, I found that the paste made, using Moroccan techniques, from unsifted henna cannot be extruded through an 18 gauge hypodermic needle.)

Established local sector artisans have an apprentice who mixes the paste, since the kneading and extrusion through a nylon stocking leaves bright red stains, despite washing immediately after. Repeated exposure to henna allows the dye to deepen, and produces a deep black stain over time. This stain, which becomes especially prominent on the right hand with which the syringe is held, was shown with pride to me by some of the tourist sector artisans, but disliked by others. The local sector artisans I interviewed consistently disliked henna stains. A technique used by one woman was to wash her hands with a weak solution of bleach and water whenever she had an opportunity during the day, and then apply a thin layer of petroleum jelly to counteract the bleach. Her hands were soft and unstained.

Technical traditions determine alternate mixing practices. All local sector artisans mix henna in enamel, plastic, glass, or clay bowls, as do some tourist sector artisans.[5] By contrast, other tourist sector artisans mix henna in wide-mouth jam jars that can be closed with a screw-on lid and brought to the work site.

Another technique is to mix the henna in a small plastic bag. Those who use this technique specify that the bag must be of the particular type used by fruit merchants. It is made of strong translucent white plastic, as opposed to the common black plastic grocery bag used by nearly all other merchants. [6]

The artisan pours henna powder into the bag, adds some water (and usually some paint thinner as well), knots the bag (loosely, at first, in case more water is needed), and begins to blend the powder and water. Holding the bag, the paste is blended between the thumb and first two fingers, using one or both hands. Initially, the bag may be rubbed between the two palms. Blending may last as little as five minutes or as long as half an hour. Artisans often pass the bag to a companion, asking her to "see" if all the lumps have been removed; this is done by kneading for several minutes.

Once the paste is judged perfectly smooth, the artisan grasps a lower corner of the plastic bag between her teeth, and pulls off a tiny piece, making a small hole. While this technique requires little equipment, such as a bowl or jar and spoon that would be carried to and from home each day, the most significant advantage of this technique is the ease and cleanliness with which a henna syringe can be filled. The bowl and bottle methods involve scooping paste from a bowl with a spoon, and then using the index finger as a spatula that scrapes henna from the spoon into the syringe. A few artisans use a technique in which they remove the barrel of the syringe, place the syringe hub in the henna pot, and then place the flange end in their mouths and suck to create a vacuum

that forces the henna in through the tip. The tip is then cleaned off with a finger before the needle is replaced. Both methods are messy. By contrast, the plastic bag-method provides a neat alternative. Artisans remove the barrel from the syringe, and fill it through the flange end by squeezing henna from the corner that has been ripped off. After a syringe has been filled, the open corner of the bag is twisted and perhaps loosely knotted. The bag keeps the remaining henna from drying out (another advantage over the bowl technique), and is thrown away when all the paste has been used.

Syringes and needles

Although in the recent past, decorative henna was applied with a kohl stick (*merwed*), henna is now most commonly applied in urban communities in Morocco with a 10 ml hypodermic syringe and an 18 (or less commonly, 20) gauge needle.[7] All tourist sector artisans and all local sector specialists use the syringe, though in the field I observed non-specialists apply henna with both kohl sticks and fingers.

The same transition from drawing to extruding henna can be observed in Indian henna techniques. Indian artisans have in the past used a thin instrument such "a match stick, a piece of wire, the pointed needle or a twig" that is dipped into a henna-filled recipient (Bhanawat, 1976:8). The paste's high viscosity allows it to form a thin filament as the instrument is touched to the skin, and then lifted and drawn over the surface of the skin. Viscosity is enhanced through the addition of ingredients such as *bhindi* (okra), *anvala* or dry *myrobalan* (perhaps cherry plum or Asian almond), and fenugreek (Bhanawat, 1976:9) While Moroccan artisans have recently adopted syringes as their preferred instrument for extruding paste, Indian artisans have begun to use commercially available pastry bag-like funnels, tubes, and home-made cones fashioned out of flexible

plastic. While extrusion techniques reduce somewhat the significance of viscosity, in Morocco, the method of preparing henna has retained a feature associated with developing viscosity: *l-'ajn*, "kneading." Kneading bread develops the dough's gluten, and transforms a paste-like matter into a springy, stretchy substance. The action of kneading henna, which increases its homogeneity without developing gluten, suggests a similar concern.

Figure 3.3: Prepared henna syringe

The bevel end of the hypodermic needle was bent back and forth several times until it broke off.

Drawing by Stephanie Weirathmueller.

Contemporary syringe technique joins the long-established baraka or spiritual power of henna (inherited from red ochre practices and reinforced through association with orthodox Islam) with the much more recent biomedical power of the syringe.[8] Because Moroccans are expected to purchase medical supplies for family members who are undergoing medical treatment at a clinic or in the hospital, most people are familiar with the process of acquiring syringes and needles. The sale of hypodermic syringes and needles is not restricted. Tourist sector artisans purchase needles and syringes at either of two large pharmacies located at opposite ends of the plaza favored by tourists. These pharmacies regularly carry 10ml syringes and needles and sell them separately.

Ten ml hypodermic syringes are sold with a smaller (21 or 20 gauge) needle in all

pharmacies for 3.5 dirhams. A large (18 gauge) needle is purchased separately for 1.5 dirhams. Used medically for inserting intravenous catheters, it is not as widely available as the smaller hypodermic needles, and the knowledge of where to purchase the larger needle is one component of the skill and technology toolkit that artisans must acquire.

Both needles are used by henna artisans. All but a few of the tourist sector artisans use the larger needle exclusively, while both the larger and smaller needles are commonly preferred by local sector artisans. The larger gauge needle produces a thicker filament of henna; hence, it allows the artisans to fill an area more quickly. The smaller gauge needle produces a thinner filament, which permits the artisan to draw more lines within a given area, giving the impression of a more finely detailed design. When henna is evaluated aesthetically, this fineness of line and detail is a quality that is often highly valued.

Both the needle and the syringe are prepared before use. The needle, which comes with a cover protecting the sharp bevel end, is bent back and forth until it breaks at the mid-point of the shaft, leaving a blunt-ended segment that is approximately 75 mm long. A second needle (the smaller one that will be thrown away, or a needle borrowed from a colleague) is then inserted into the hollow tip of the blunt needle, and rotated at an angle in a circular fashion, fixing the flattened shape caused by bending the needle back and forth.[9] The needle is then fitted over the hub of the syringe. It can be removed easily for cleaning.

Syringes and needles are replaced infrequently, either because henna has dried in the needle, clogging it beyond repair, or because an artisan's work materials have been seized by police. Needles are occasionally purchased separately in order to replace a clogged, bent, or lost one. Replacing needles is a recurring topic of conversation, and

those who manage to keep the same needle and syringe for many months are proud of this skill, and offer advice to others on how to unclog blocked tips.

The syringe is made of plastic, and has two parts, the body and the barrel. The barrel fits inside the body, and pushes the contents out through the needle. The barrel's end has a rubber plug that provides a watertight seal that slips against the walls of the body. The syringe is held in the palm, gripped securely by the four fingers. The thumb is then used to depress the barrel. This technique, which differs dramatically from the grip used by medical technicians, is used by all artisans who apply henna with a syringe. When sketching henna designs one day for me to practice, one artisan used this grip on a pencil as well.

Many tourist sector artisans remove the barrel from the syringe and wrap it in a single layer of black plastic torn from a grocery bag. The plastic breaks the seal, and becomes smeared with henna, so that the thumb and forefinger (index finger) used by the artisan to depress the barrel become smudged and stained dark over time. Both the thumb and the side of the forefinger (which the flanges of the syringe rest against) become calloused from the pressure required to depress the barrel. When she demonstrated this technique for me the first time, one artisan said the plastic allowed the barrel to slide more easily. I practiced with and without the plastic later, and found no difference with a new syringe. With an old syringe, however, whose rubber stopper has begun to deteriorate and adhere to the sides of the barrel, this technique is very effective at preventing sticking. This practice was not used by the local sector artisans I observed.

Some artisans, very few in the tourist sector but most in the local sector, used glass rather than plastic syringes. An evident feature of glass syringes is their larger capacity, which means that they have to be refilled less frequently. However, glass

syringe users say the primary advantage is that the barrel slides more easily, and is thus less tiring. Another important advantage is the status associated with the glass syringe. It carries much more prestige than the plastic syringe that is commonly used. The interest of artisans and customers in the glass syringes demonstrates its higher prestige compared to plastic. (Glass is preferable to plastic in other items as well, notably household dishes. Its higher quality is presented as self-evident.) Those who don't use glass syringes say that they are very breakable, and costly to replace. Users don't counter this argument. While the plastic syringe plus the appropriate needle costs 5 dirhams, the glass one costs 30.

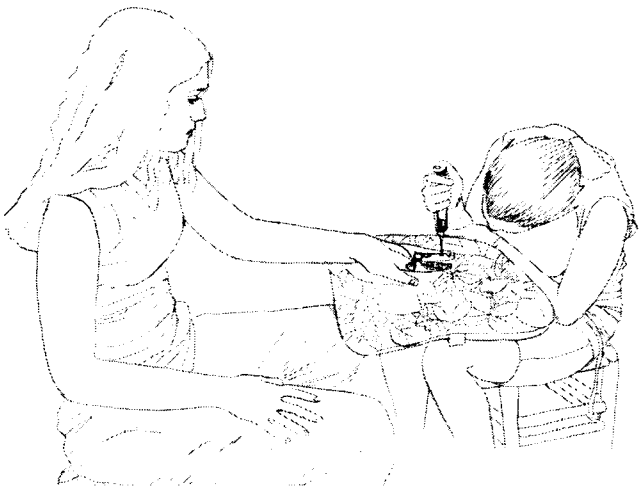
Some women work with two syringes, taking a second (filled) one from their bag to work with when the first has been emptied. The empty syringe is handed to a group-mate to refill, or it would be placed in the artisan's lap or bag until she can fill it later. A few artisans I observed, all of them young girls, work without their own syringe, and borrow one after negotiating with their customer. Borrowing from a group-mate is accomplished relatively easily, however artisans who work alone are often rebuffed or rebuked when they try to borrow. Those who have their own syringes lend them outside their cooperative group with great reluctance. This leads to frequent disputes between loners and groups. Loners who leave clients to look for supplies risk losing the client if they are gone too long. The organization of artisans in cooperative groups is discussed further in Chapter 4.

Posture

Densely configured designs that extend well beyond the wrists and ankles (in the style preferred for weddings), can take a skilled artisan two to three hours to complete.

Postures that allow both the client and the artisan to sit comfortably for this period constitute another way in which local and tourist sector technical traditions diverge. Local sector artisans, working in household contexts, encourage clients to sit back. Depending on the available furnishings, the client sits on the blanket-covered floor, a mattress lying on the floor, or a mattress raised on a wooden platform several feet above the floor. In all cases, cushions are placed behind the client's back, so that she can comfortably brace herself. Additional pillows are used to support her legs (one behind the knees, and another under the calves) and hands as necessary, so that the limbs do not tire excessively during the process of applying henna. By supporting the client's limbs, the artisan also minimizes shaking, and establishes a habitus in which the artisan (rather than the client), directs the limbs' movement. Pillows are also used to raise the limbs so that the artisan can sit with a straight back. She sits facing the client when working on the hands and feet, or at a right angle to the client when applying henna to the hands. Despite these precautions, several local sector artisans complained of back pain.

Figure 3.4: Applying henna at home



Here, henna is being applied by a young woman who works in the local sector and finds work through a personal network that includes a housekeeper who cleans homes for several families on a weekly basis. Her client is a European woman who is among the housekeeper's customers as well.
Drawing by S. Weirathmueller after photo by author.

Tourist sector artisans working in the open market face a number of constraints in this respect. First of all, they are working in public, on an asphalt surface that is

considered extremely dirty. Neither client nor artisan sits on the ground. [10] The henna kit also includes a few more items. Most women have a low plastic or wooden stool of their own (18 dirhams) that they sat on much of the time. Many have one or more additional stools, often smaller and cheaper, intended for clients. The stacking plastic stools that most women use break (or are broken by the police) periodically, but they are cheaper, lighter, and more easily stored than the comfortable wooden ones. A number of artisans however, especially young women, don't use stools and walk around instead of sitting while looking for customers. On occasion, a mobile artisan may borrow stools from another artisan with whom she has a relationship of exchange. Artisans' work kits also include one or more rags which are used to wipe away mistakes or clean off the syringe. Some women use a second rag to protect their clothing from dirt while applying ankle bracelets with a client's foot in their laps.

While stools allow the tourist sector artisans and customers more comfort, there is no additional support for the client's arm while henna is being applied. This postural dimension is one factor, though not the only one, that limits the time available for henna application. Artisans have developed compensating techniques such as placing the client's hand on the artisan's thigh in order to steady the hand while henna is being applied. Alternately, placing the client's hand on her own (the artisan's palm faces up) allows an artisan to raise the hand to a more comfortable working height, and to rotate the hand slightly right and left if the pattern extends to the edge. These postural techniques are widely dispersed among experienced tourist sector artisans, and are part of the knowledge that new artisans acquire formally through demonstration and informally through observing others at work.

The absence of appropriate furnishings (walls, pillows, clean seating space)

discourages the use of a henna form that, when applied in the local sector, requires both reclining postures and prolonged rest: in the tourist sector, henna is rarely applied to the tops or bottoms of the feet. On the other hand, new forms have emerged. While medicinal henna is applied to any part of the body that requires cooling, and ritual henna may be applied to the entire skin surface, decorative henna is applied in contemporary Morocco only to the hands and forearms (occasionally as far as the elbow), and to the feet and lower legs. There is evidence that henna has been used as to decorate the face, historically in Morocco, and in the recent past in other regions. Emile Laoust, for instance, writes of rural Berber women that "on holidays, the hands, legs, and face are literally covered" with henna (Laoust, 1920:138, my translation), while Vonderheyden writes that henna is applied to the face among the Beni Snous (Algeria) and among the Berbers of the Atlas Mountains in Morocco (Vonderheyden, 1934a:44). As I was returning from the field in August 2001, an employee at LaGuardia airport in New York noticed the extensive (and well executed) henna patterns on my hands and feet, and shared some of his family history with me. His mother, who had emigrated from a Palestinian village in the mid-twentieth century, used to apply henna in decorative curves and flowers on her cheeks, chin, and forehead.

Technique and form

The application of henna to other parts of the body than hands and feet has reemerged in the tourist sector. Influenced by North American and European tattooing of the ankle, lower back, upper arm (both deltoid and bicep), and shoulder blade (locations that are traditionally neither tattooed nor hennaed in Morocco), contemporary tourist sector artisans have increasingly marketed medallion-like henna designs that are

adapted to these body areas. Compared to the feet, all of these body areas are easier for the artisan to henna in an unsupported posture that must avoid direct contact with the ground.

Furthermore, these forms do not impair the movement and use of the involved body part in the same way that application to the hand and feet do. It is interesting to note that in the local sector, henna applied to the hand should cover either the palm and dorsal surface, or the palm only, while henna applied to the foot should cover either the sole and dorsal surface, or the sole only. Thus both complete and minimal local forms alienate the individual from production and activity for a period of several hours while the henna is applied, and then for an additional period of several hours while it dries. Minimal tourist henna is applied, by contrast, to the back of the hand, less commonly to the top of the foot, and very frequently to the wrist, upper arm, shoulder, or ankle. All of these locations allow the hennaed subject to continue her (or his) activity, which is in this case not the reproductive labour of the household but individual recreation.

A discussion of design construction in my fieldnotes begins with a description of several forms that have emerged in the tourist sector, and shows the extent to which these forms are presented as a standard repertoire: "She asked what I wanted, a whole hand, or a finger, or a bracelet, or an anklet. A whole hand, I said."

The names of these new forms reflect the parts of the body to which they are applied, or types of jewelry (another form of adornment) they resemble. Thus, new forms include *brassleh* (Fr., bracelet, a design that encircles the wrist), *khulkhal* (ankle bracelet), and *sbii'a* (finger, a design that covers part of the back of the hand and a single finger). Tattoo forms are also frequently named according to their location on the body (see Michaux-Bellaire and Salmon, 1905:93-96).

Figure 3.5: Finger (sbii'a), khaliji style, local sector

This illustration depicts a recently completed design, with the henna paste still on the hand. Contemporary photographs of wedding henna depict the bride, alone or with friends, holding her hands in the air to display the paste, as shown here. This draws attention to the role of henna as a marker of the liminal period.

Drawing by Stephanie Weirathmueller, after design photograph from field site.

Location

While the physical aspects of the plaza produce characteristic postures that affect henna production, moral aspects also influence the production of henna in this space. The plaza is a busy public area traversed by local residents, especially men, throughout the day.[11] In the evenings, it is the site of a market, where local residents as well as domestic and international tourists congregate in order to enjoy the atmosphere. Local women are accompanied by brothers, sons, or husbands, however, and they pass through some areas without lingering. In addition to food sellers and entertainers are a number of merchants who sell remedies for sexually transmitted diseases and impotence. They are perceived as dangerously seductive: one merchant uses a large lizard in his act, and mothers struggle to drag their children away from this enthralling sight before his

sales pitch about male virility begins. Another displays large drawings and photos of female genitalia. In informal interviews and in daily conversation, residents (both men and women) attested to the significance of the square in the local imaginary as male space; women can go through, and enjoy it occasionally, especially when accompanied by an appropriate male chaperone. While most of the henna artisans are located as far as possible from these merchants, the entire square is polluted by association. Like other carnivals, it is a liminal place.

This liminality is reflected in the segmentation of the market. Artisans provide services for both international tourists, who are fairly unaware of the market's connotations for local residents, and for domestic tourists, and many of the MREs (*Marocain résidant à l'étranger*, "Moroccan residing in foreign territory") who visit especially during the summer months. Some can be identified by their clothing (foreign-made, perhaps unusually festive or bare); others self-identify to the artisans who, suspecting, call out to them and ask if they are *gazelles marocaines* ("Moroccan gazelles," that is, domestic female tourists). The artisans are rarely wrong, and they often talk about the behavioral and linguistic clues that identify Moroccan women as domestic tourists or MREs. In a liminal state themselves, where the taboos normally associated with their status don't apply, female domestic and MRE tourists are an important market segment for tourist sector henna artisans. The taboo that local residents associate with the plaza can be broken; instead, the plaza (and the henna that marks bodies that have enjoyed it) connotes participation, along with local men and international tourists, in a valued activity. While local women do visit the plaza, they reject being marked by it. One local resident said that she liked to walk by the henna artisans, and see what they were doing and watch them for a moment, but she couldn't have henna done there because she is

from here. The segmentation of the market in this way encourages the emergence of new forms that are not regulated by the aesthetic and life stage rules of the existing local tradition.

Gender and life stage rules

During interviews with local residents about henna rituals in S-Suuq l-Qdiim, women mentioned eight moments. Three are associated with weddings: *nhaar l-hinna* (the day on which dry henna is rubbed over the body of the bride a week before the wedding), *nhaar n-nqiish* (the day on which decorative henna is applied), and *l-arba'iin yawm* (decorative application on the fortieth day following the wedding, when the bride returns to her parents for her first visit). Three are associated with birth: the application of solid henna to the mother's hands and feet just before childbirth, the application of henna to the baby, and another 40 day ceremony when henna is applied decoratively to the mother. At circumcision, henna is smeared on the child's hand, and applied decoratively or smeared on the hands of the mother and her female kin. The final moment is the decorative application of henna to a widow when she completes her prescribed three-month period of mourning, burns her mourning clothes, and re-enters social life.

Not only is henna traditionally incorporated into life stage rituals, but its use is subject to rules that associate the areas on which it may be applied with life stages. These rules also differentiate the application of henna by gender. Customarily in Morocco, non-medical henna application is subject to clear rules. Despite some innovation, these rules continue to be strictly maintained in the local sector. Gender rules are particularly strict in S-Suuq l-Qdiim. Henna is not applied to males after the rituals of infancy,

circumcision, and minor applications (a small dot) at marriage. Young boys may ask for a small dot (called a "moon") when the household's women are applying henna, but otherwise henna use is reserved for women.

The association of henna with both weddings and circumcisions has influenced social responses to the odor as well as the sight of henna. Ground henna mixed with water has a distinctive odor that can be compared to wet earth or decaying vegetable matter. This scent impregnates skin that has been dyed with henna, lasting several days. While some find the smell erotic, others claim the earthy vegetable smell is repulsive. Several women told me of brides who had not worn henna at their weddings because of the groom's objections to it. Another told me that she liked henna, but whenever she did it her husband complained of the smell and said that she couldn't do it anymore. A young man told me that he hated henna and especially the smell of it because it reminded him of the smell of henna at his circumcision, and the pain and fear that he felt.

Both women and girls have henna applied on the eve of several religious holidays, while small amounts (a single dot on the hand) may be applied to young boys at these times. (Little girls and boys may have henna decorations on the palms of their hands. The back of the hand is avoided because the skin of this area is considered too tender.) Henna is applied to a woman's feet for the first time at her wedding; thereafter, she may wear henna on her hands and feet when she wishes. Describing life stage rules of henna application in Lamu, Kenya, Young writes,

> Girls may begin to apply henna at an early age, but may not apply it to their legs and feet until they are married. In public the only parts of a [Muslim] woman's skin not covered by the *buibui* (a black garment worn by [Muslim] women when they go out of doors, covering them from head to foot) are her feet. It is therefore seen as provocative and socially

> unacceptable for an unmarried girl to wear henna on her feet and legs. Once married, however, it is understood that the woman applies henna for the benefit of her husband, and not for the attentions of any other man. (Young, 1992:18)

Tunisian practice at the beginning of the twentieth century restricted application to the hands of young women, as well. Tremearne writes,

> As the *shamowa* [the red-legged hornbill] has red legs, none of the unmarried youths or maidens might stain their hands or feet with henna. If anyone had broken this tabu he would have sickened and died for the *uwar-gida* (mother of the house) or *kan-gida* (head of the house) would naturally have been angry at young persons trying to dress like her. (Tremearne 1914:35, cited in Field, 1958:98)

As mentioned above, inconvenience has limited the popularity of the feet as a site for henna adornment among both tourists and artisans. Yet, to the extent that this practice has been interpreted by tourist sector artisans and customers, it has been stripped of life cycle and even gender rules. Motivated by business concerns more than social ones, artisans neither discourage nor educate customers who are willing to pay and able to wait for the henna to dry.

It is essential to note that merchants in other sectors have a similar practice of generally ignoring gender and life stage rules when engaging in transactions with tourists who are outside the social system in which these rules exist. On numerous occasions, I saw younger and older foreign women dressed in different men's caftan styles (*gandora* and *fawqia*), which are short-sleeved garments that are quite distinct from women's clothing, although they too are long and dress-like in appearance. While Moroccan women do sometimes wear short sleeved dresses in the home, these are made of rayon while men's short-sleeved robes are sewn from cotton or cotton-rich blends that are often preferred by North American and European women. Men's caftans are also commonly made in pale blue, pale green, white, and striped fabrics, while women's

caftans are often brighter colors and floral patterns. Several European and North American women who wore men's caftans explained to me that they knew they had purchased men's clothing, but they preferred the colors and fabrics. Less frequent was gender-bending in the other direction, however. Apart from the application of henna to male tourists, which was frequent, the sole instance I observed was a young foreign man, clearly a tourist, sitting in a café dressed in embroidered women's pyjamas.[12]

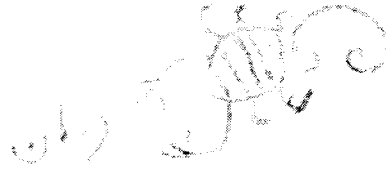
The relaxation of life stage rules for henna application in the tourist sector has diffused to the traditional sector as well. One 25 year old female domestic tourist I interviewed stated that the phenomenon of applying henna to young girls' feet has emerged only in the last ten years, and is practiced as a conscious imitation of trends in Europe and North America.[13] When she was a girl, she told me, she would have been slapped if she had asked to have henna on her feet. She said, "When I was a teenager, if we even put a bracelet — just a little one [she circles her ankle with two fingers] they would say, 'Oh-la-la, you are going too far.' It was like wearing a miniskirt."

She drew my attention, however, to the age at which young girls and their families no longer engage in this playful trend. Once a girl is 10 or 11, an age at which rural girls are sometimes married (though contrary to national law), the customary life stage rules regarding henna application are rigorously maintained. "There cannot be confusion," another woman said in reference to the age at which the life stage rule is strictly enforced. Confusion, here, refers to the ambiguity between the essential categories of virgin and not-virgin.

While interviewing tourist sector artisans in one area, I noticed one artisan who was dressed in a carefully pinned hijab that indicated her desire to present herself as a practicing and conservative Muslim. Though this distinguished her from many artisans,

adopting Islamic attire is a well-documented image management strategy employed by many working women in the Middle East.[14] More curious than her garb, however, was the fact that she was applying henna to the feet of a young man. Although few male tourists have henna applied to their feet, many have armbands or medallions on the bicep or deltoid. Geometric styles and scorpions are selected by artisans as designs that are suitable for men and boys. The practice of offering henna to male tourists is a dramatic change from gender rules of henna application that continue to be preserved in the local sector.

Figure 3.6: Scorpion applied to male client



The Arabic text reads "Waan," which was how the artisan phonetically represented the name "Ron."

Drawing by S. Weirathmueller, after photograph by author.

For domestic tourists and MREs, the purchase of a henna design while engaging in tourism links the childhood experience of henna in the context of festivals with the adult experience of partaking in tourism as a ritual that locates them within the liminal solidarity (and communitas) of other global travelers. While historical records point to the use of henna by adult men during wedding ceremonies, and this practice continues in some areas, as a rule henna is pointedly avoided by adult Moroccan men. (Except in case of sickness or during war, the use of henna by men is prohibited in the fifteenth century religious text *Nuzhat al-Majaalis*, Vonderheyden, 1934a:45.) However male Moroccan tourists in their teens and twenties are a market segment that some of the younger artisans especially target, though the men's interest in henna appears secondary to their interest in socializing with the young women. Like life stage rules, the relaxation of gender rules has affected local residents to some extent, as local young men engage in

behavior similar to male domestic tourists. However, local sector artisans do not apply henna to men, and laughed at the idea whenever I described it.

Symmetry and variation

In addition to gender and life stage rules that normatively determine to whom henna can be applied, local sector norms of henna application also regulate henna styles and motifs. These norms are less explicit than the gender and life stage rules, and are more in the order of aesthetic preferences. Norms are communicated through verbal practices, as people (artisans, customers, and others of both sexes) express preferences and requirements.

Symmetry, for example, is highly valued. Although a simple medallion may be applied to the palm of the right hand, generally both hands (or feet) must be decorated, or neither. However, they may be adorned on a single side. If a single side is adorned, it must be the palm, not the dorsal side of the hand. This norm is reflected in the assumption that local sector artisans do both hands for a stated price. By contrast, tourist sector artisans negotiate a price for a single hand, or for both hands. This allows artisans the negotiating strategy of first agreeing to a lower price and then raising it by stating that the price is for *yedd wahid*, a single hand; alternatively, an artisan may say that her price is higher than another's because while the other gave a price for just one hand, she was giving a price for both. Tourists, both domestic and international, often have henna applied to a single hand.

The strictness of the law of symmetry in the local sector was communicated to me the day I "passed my exam" by applying henna (*kado*, "en cadeau" or "for free") to the friend of one of the tourist artisans. After I completed the back of one hand, she

turned it over and said that I had to do the palm. I replied that I was just going to do one side. She laughed, and said, no, if you just do one side, it must be the palm. The others sitting with us concurred. Once I had completed the palm as well, I again declared that I had finished. My "customer" protested, and said that henna has to be applied to both hands, lest the other be jealous. Afterwards, I began to notice that only in the tourist sector was it considered appropriate to apply henna to a single hand, or to the back of the hand without also adorning the palm.

Within the prescribed symmetry of henna application must be variation. In S-Suuq l-Qdiim, artisans do not apply mirror-image designs as are suggested by Indian design books. Color-block henna, in which large bands and dots are applied with a finger or a stick, which is found in rural areas surrounding S-Suuq l-Qdiim, is recognized but not valued by urban Moroccans. Highly appreciated designs demonstrate a variety of recognized elements, displaying what I will call here the broad graphic vocabulary of the artisan. This variation must also be structured. Again, we can think of this in linguistic terms as the grammar of design. Elements must fit together in a recognized way, a way that communicates knowledge acquired through observation of many other variations.

Density of design is another important characteristic that artisans examine. A good design is one that has many closely placed elements, giving as much color as possible to the hand. Moroccan customers sometimes chide an artisan who says a design is finished before it has the desired density; such a design is said to be *khfif bezzaf* or "too light." "Fill it," these customers would say, indicating empty areas with a finger of the other hand. The artisans would sometimes comply wordlessly, while other times they would begin to bargain for a new price.

Artisans protected their prerogative to do "light" designs by criticizing the

heavily covered hand-drawn Indian designs they saw in imported design books. When I found photocopies of these designs for sale in the market one day, I brought them with me and asked what the members of one work group thought of them. "Too heavy," said Zahra with a frown, "it's not pretty."

Zahra's criticism of the Indian design is linked to the artisans' wish to do designs that can be completed relatively quickly. While henna designs done at home may take an hour and a half or longer to do two hands, marketplace artisans complete two hands in half an hour, or less, depending on the customer's vigilance. The marketplace is a less comfortable work area than the home, where artisans sit on a cushion placed on the floor, and angle the customer's hands and feet to a comfortable degree with more pillows.

Some of the characteristics of local market henna are absent from most of the tourist sector designs (see Table 3.1). Doubled lines, for instance, are omitted because of the extra time they require. When I was applying a design one day, Lamya said, "Leave that out. You don't need to do that. It's not necessary." There is a conscious effort to simplify designs to make them faster.

On the other hand, many aspects that make tourist henna distinct emerge from the different patterns of knowledge acquisition and transmission that characterize the local and tourist sectors. Local sector artisans apprentice with an established artisan for a period that can be as long as several years. One artisan told me that she begged her teacher for months, and was taken on as an apprentice only after agreeing not just to help with the disagreeable labor of henna work (mixing paste, applying solid coats to the sole of the foot, washing and fetching tools and materials) but also with the master's household work as well. She performed laundry and scrubbed the floors for the artisan

she worked with for two years before beginning to work on her own. During the apprenticeship, she observed many times, and absorbed the discrete motifs or graphic vocabulary characteristic of the different styles, as well as the procedure of design construction.

Table 3.1 Characteristics of local and tourist market henna

Local market (S-Suuq l-Qdiim)	*Tourist market*
Sharp corners on zigzag lines distinguish them from scalloped lines	No distinction between zigzags and scalloped lines
Straight lines tend to occur in pairs or groups of three, creating bands of negative (white) space	Straight lines are rarely doubled
Doubled lines are parallel	Doubled lines converge and diverge; extra space may be filled with scallops
Each line is of uniform width along its length	Lines are of uneven width
Repeated elements are of uniform size	Repeated elements may vary in size
Dominant lines are thin	Dominant lines are thick

Tourist sector artisans possess a much smaller graphic vocabulary than artisans working in the local sector. They also possess less knowledge about constructing different designs; i.e., the grammar through which discrete motifs are organized into meaningful wholes. An excerpt from my fieldnotes describes the process of creating one of the tourist sector designs, the *sbii'a* ("finger"), one of the most common tourist sector forms:

> She immediately began to draw a line from the fingernail of my index finger down to the second knuckle, and diagonally across the back of my hand to the outside wrist bone. This would anchor the design: the finger line was integrated into what she called a "bracelet" — a wide pattern-filled band that runs the length of the finger — and the segment that crossed the knuckle into a diamond, and that segment that ran diagonally across the back of my hand into a leaf.

Meaning and variation

While some henna styles rely on solid areas of henna paste applied to different parts of the hand and foot, others are composed of interlocking and repeating forms created from curved or straight lines of henna. Some women identify these forms by names such as *qbibat* ("domes"), *wrida* ("flower"), *warqa* ("leaf"), *silsla* ("chain" or "zipper"), and *damya* ("checker board") that emphasize resemblances to geometric shapes, architectural details, and natural objects.[15]

While the vocabulary relating to decorative henna compares it to writing, as described in the previous chapter, Moroccan henna patterns do not incorporate actual text. This form of henna motif has, however, been documented in Iran, where henna designs have included some form of text (Field 1958).[16] Contemporary henna practices in South Asia (and among North Americans of South Asian descent) also incorporate text in the particular form of the groom's initials. The dissimulation/identification of these initials in the bridal henna is described as one of the many games in which the newlyweds attempt to establish their dominance in the marriage (Bhanawat, 1976; Gorfain, Kapchan, and Young, 1996).

The entire work (hands and feet) must be executed in a single style. In S-Suuq l-Qdiim, these styles were *khaliji* (a vine and flower design whose name means "from the Gulf;" it is known by local sector artisans as *imarati*, "from the Emirates"), *marrakshi* (a geometric pattern named for the city of Marrakesh, and sometimes called *bildi*, "traditional"), and a hybrid floral-geometric design that marries aspects of both of these styles. It is significant that the two named styles found in S-Suuq l-Qdiim use *nasab* (singular, *nisbah*), names that refer to the place of origin, rather than names that describe design features.

The use of nasab highlights the association of particular styles with geographic areas, though, as with Arabic surnames, association does not necessarily indicate origin,[17] nor in this particular case does it indicate exclusive use or identification with a particular region.[18] Marrakshi style henna is found in many parts of Morocco, and while it may not have originated in Marrakesh, the city is considered by many of its residents to have the most beautiful henna patterns in Morocco. Fez, which dates from the ninth century, is the location of the country's oldest university, the Qarawiyyin. Its reputation as a center of learning and culture (in the sense implied by Matthew Arnold, 1994 [1869]) is well established. The floral henna style known by most artisans as khaliji or imarati is called *fassi* ("from Fez") by some.

Women praised designs that demonstrated inter-connected motifs. Marrakshi henna, composed of interlocking geometric forms, is not the only (or even the most) prized form, however. Imarati, characterized by elaborate floral patterns, is also considered beautiful, and was particularly popular in 2000 and 2001, when local sector henna artisans charged a premium for it because of its relative novelty. Speaking one day about the differences between the two popular styles, one local sector artisan said, "Imarati is more expensive because it is new and not everyone knows how to do it." Her neighbor, also a local sector artisan, added, "But it is easier and takes less time, and it is prettier. You just start with a big flower and it goes from there. People charge less for marrakshi, but it takes longer because there are all the little lines. Your back gets sore."

Not all known styles are currently or commonly used. One style, which a local sector artisan described as *naqtaat* ("dots," a floral pattern characterized by small dots along the outside edges of leaves, petals, and vines) was recognized but not used in the area. Identifying it from a photograph, one artisan said it was ugly and gave her headache

to look at it. Several suggested that this design was local to Tiznit or Agadir. One woman said there were other styles too, like *kasawi* (from Casablanca) and *rbati* (from Rabat). "What are they like," I asked. She said she didn't know them. "Every area has its own design," she said.

Figure 3.7: Naqtaat

This design, described as naqtaat (dots), demonstrates features of several styles. The use of leaves and vines is clearly imarati, while the toes show the divided planes and palm trees of marrakshi style. The abundance of dotted ornaments on the doubled lines gives it a distinctive appearance.

Drawing by S. Weirathmueller, after design photograph obtained at field site.

Artisans and residents said that the marrakshi design is "for brides" or "for weddings." Could someone have another design if she wanted, I asked. "Yes," one woman said, "if she wants." While most brides favored the marrakshi design, I saw a few wedding photos where the bride's henna was in the flowery imarati style.

I found that while some women use names to identify design components, they do not associate meanings with them.[19] Rashida is a teenaged henna artisan who has worked as a tourist sector artisan for several years. Like most of the other henna artisans, she speaks rudimentary English, French, and Spanish, and knows several phrases in other European languages. One day I was sitting with her when Kabir, a man who worked occasionally in a spice shop, said he would tell me about the meanings of the different parts of the design that Rashida had drawn on my hand. Tourist oriented herb

shops employ young men like Kabir who are skilled at "talking to tourists," as they say, and who, like other tourist sector merchants, have mastered story-telling performances that transform ordinary commodities such as paprika, tea glasses, and vials of pigment into curiosities that can be authoritatively described by the traveler at home. Kabir "read" Rashida's pattern of pointed arches and crosses, and told me the meaning of the motifs was "windows and wind."[20] These designs are catalogued in art book discussions of symbolism in Morocco, displayed at many of the shops that specialize in herbal remedies whose value (and cost) has been enhanced by myth and folklore.

Individuals did not ascribe discrete meanings to designs, and my attempts to assemble a lexicon of motifs was fruitless. A middle-aged man who sold books in the local market said its meaning was this: *L-hnani qalb l-hani,* "Henna is the heart of tranquility." Upon learning that I was doing research about henna traditions and contemporary practices, one young Moroccan woman asked me to tell her about the meanings of henna designs. "I read about them in an art book, but I can't remember what he said," Nassima told me. "You can find all the meanings in the book."

Many art traditions in Morocco are regional. For instance, the provenance of rugs can generally be identified by such characteristics as the use and style of borders, central medallions, and other graphic elements; dyes and color combinations; and fiber type. Pottery can also be identified as part of a regional tradition based on the types of clay, glaze, and decoration that have been used. Moroccan embroidery in the early twentieth century demonstrated clear regional differentiation in colorways, technique, materials, and motifs. One element of the complex meaning ascribed to henna, tattoo, and other graphic designs is knowledge of (or from) another place, acquired through personal experience, including movement from one area to another following marriage

or resettlement (Searight, 1984). The most distinct regional traditions in henna practice, however, are the rural-urban distribution of color-block and syringe-technique henna, on the one hand, and the distribution of different forms of color block henna among different rural areas.

Naqsh and tuurida

Some henna practices emphasize color more than line, and are not the work of paid specialists. While a paid artisan customarily applies bridal henna, non-specialists apply henna in many circumstances. Wedding henna, for instance, which is spectacular in its ceremoniousness complexity, as the bride maintains a serious and neutral demeanor and allows others to engage in a lengthy application of substances to her body, should not be viewed as a paradigm for henna use in other rituals, but rather one model among many.

Accounts of henna adornment in early ethnographies refer to areas of solid henna. Eugene Aubin, for instance, describes the engagement ceremony where "henna is smeared on the girl's hands and feet, in public token of his betrothal" (Aubin 1906:257). Similar henna practices are depicted in Edward Lane's classic, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, first published in 1860. Lane records that upper-and middle-class women, and many poor women used henna as well (Lane 1908:39). While many dyed only finger- and toe-nails, while others dyed the fingers to the first joints as well. Other designs added a stripe across the middle joints, and dots at the base of the fingers. I call these styles "color-block" henna. Variation in color-block henna in contemporary Morocco is associated with place of residence, place of origin, and extent of social and kin network. These variations include covering fingers to the first or second knuckles,

covering the palm and fingers entirely, palms covered partially with one or several filled-in geometric shapes, and borders that are sharply delineated or blurry.

These variations are also mentioned in the literature. Vonderheyden recorded, for example, that women in Tlemcen dyed their palms and fingers on that side, and, on the dorsal side, their fingertips to the second knuckle; by contrast, women in Algiers applied solid color to their palms, but when using designs, decorated the dorsal side instead (Vonderheyden, 1934a:43-44).

Another contemporary form of Moroccan henna, called *skotsh* ("scotch tape"), was not just a style but a technique. Skotsh is applied by non-specialists who purchase stencils from shops that stock henna. The templates consist of strips of electrical tape that have been punched with holes that are round, half-round, and diamond in shape. The strips of tape are arranged in hand-like shapes on large sheets of plastic (recycled fertilizer bags), and sold in pairs for 3.5 to 5 dirhams. Other strips are longer, meant to provide a decorative band around the edge of the foot whose sole has been entirely covered with henna paste. These strips are sold in pairs; some are accompanied by a wider, shorter piece that is used at the base of the toes. The adhesive strips are affixed to the skin and henna is rubbed on top. They can be reused many times, and are often passed from friend to friend and neighbor to neighbor.[21]

Skotsh, or resist-application, appears to be an intermediate step between solid henna and patterned designs. Over time, henna practices in Morocco have shifted from primarily solid to primarily patterned motifs; this shift has been most complete in urban areas, while solid and color-block henna has remained popular in many rural communities.

Figure 3.8: Skotsh

This illustration depicts black henna applied using the skotsh technique.

Drawing by Stephanie Weirathmueller, after design photograph obtained at field site.

Emily of Wazzan, a British woman who married a Moroccan notable and lived many years in northern Morocco, as I mentioned in the previous chapter, describes the process of resist-application of henna using fabric strips. This is a clear precursor of contemporary skotsh techniques. She writes:

> For the feet, sandals are simulated by first arranging calico straps on the foot and round the base of the big toe. The henna paste is applied with care so as not to mar the symmetry of the straps; once the foot is well covered with paste, white cloths are wrapped round, and over that thick woollen ones. These coverings are not removed for some hours, when the paste generally comes off with the coverings. The rolled calico is removed, and a red-brown sandaled foot is presented. Sometimes the simulated shape received a decoration by a lace-work pattern being painted on the lines in "Harkos," a kind of Indian ink, which lasts for a long time. This is applied with a pointed cane pen. Sometimes a professional stainer will be summoned, and patterns will be designed with henna paste, which must be dried over a charcoal fire. This takes a very long time, and one can but admire the effect produced afterwards,

> especially when the design is interwoven with the delicate tracing of "El Harkos." I have on one or two occasions had my hands decorated with "Harkos," and at a distance Europeans thought I was wearing black silk mittens. (Wazzan, 1912:126-127)

Resist patterns have been created in Morocco and Algeria by candle wax dripped on the skin in decorative patterns that remain undyed by henna rubbed over the area (Vonderheyden, 1934a:46), and similarly in Mauritania where the resist areas are drawn with a stick dipped in a mixture of ash and sap from the false euphorbia (Tauzin, 1998:38).[22] This resist technique is used in other contexts as well. Tauzin notes that it has been used in fabric dyeing in Mauritania (Tauzin, 1998:37). Currently available in Morocco are cylindrical covered boxes made of dried cow leather, historically produced in sub-Saharan Africa, which demonstrate an exterior geometric pattern created using a wax-based resist-dyeing technique (see also De Zeltner, 1932).[23]

Aline Tauzin has described the resist method used by contemporary henna artisans in Mauritania.[24] Adhesive medical tape (Fr., *sparadrap*) that has been precut into narrow bands is available commercially in shops that sell beads and perfumes. (Initially hard to acquire, like the syringes used by Moroccan artisans, the tape is now widely available due to the privatization and expansion of pharmacies.) Strips of prepared tape are pressed to the skin, and cut with a razor blade into narrower and shorter segments that form interlocking geometric shapes that cover the area to be hennaed. The designs, which take several hours to complete, are perfectly symmetrical, and created without reference to visual guides. (Tauzin 1998:40)

Ritual aspects of technique and design

Fieldnotes from conversations with women from low-income families in S-Suuq l-Qdiim demonstrate some of the contexts in which henna is applied by non-specialists.

In some rural communities, women apply henna for each other using a syringe, a *merwed* (stick used to apply kohl), or a finger to draw designs. However, much more common is the simple rubbing of henna on the skin to obtain a uniform color. This is done for amusement and relaxation, for beauty, and for ritual purposes. One woman who had just given birth explained that before going to the hospital, the parturient woman should take a handful of henna paste and rub her hands with it. Her labor had advanced quickly, and she regretted that she hadn't had time to do this before leaving home. Another woman described circumcision practices in her natal village: rather than bringing the artisan to inscribe designs on the hands and feet of female relatives, the mother of the young boy grabs a handful of henna, and rubs her hands with it. This practice produces a form of henna that is called *tuurida*, "reddish color" or *l-hinna l-'aadiya*, "regular henna."

The distinction between solid and decorative henna appears in other cultural contexts as well. In her study of henna use in contemporary Mauritania, Aline Tauzin argues that henna's protective function underlies the practice of applying a uniform covering of henna to the hands and feet. She writes,

> ... it is said that the henna of the hands protects the body from the head to the navel, while that of the feet protects it from the navel to the feet. This treatment is considered an obligation. It is a "right" that the body's extremities exercise, and according to which the fragments of skin that have been left their natural color can demand account on the day of the Last Judgment. Old women constantly repeat this, and are bothered by the younger women's preference for ornamental styles that only partially cover them.
>
> It is again this characteristic of protection that is invoked in critical moments where death approaches, such as childbearing and sickness. The dye must, again, be regular and motifs are prohibited, since they would render the henna ineffective. (Tauzin, 1998:17, my translation)

Despite the importance attached to covering entire areas of the body with this substance, due to the high cost of henna in the past and also as a result of the practices

of sharing henna with friends and giving left-over henna to servants and children, a form of henna employing small designs necessarily existed. Tauzin contends that this practice, originally of dots distributed over the hand, developed into a style of henna that employed small motifs. She sees this as the forerunner of contemporary resist patterns (Tauzin, 1998:38-39), a position supported by Kapchan, who contends that decorative henna (as opposed to ritual, solid henna) emerged in Morocco only in the past three or four generations (Kapchan, 1996:161). The transition from solid to decorative henna, Tauzin argues, corresponds with an emerging model of health and sickness in which these afflictions emanate not from outside but from within the body. "Henna's function as a barrier, a protective shell, thus becomes defunct." (Tauzin, 1998:36, my translation)

The contrast between solid and decorative henna has been conceived in other ways that contribute to our understanding of form and function. Kapchan writes,

> In Fadela's description of an authentic wedding, the bride is not painted with henna so much as she is washed and smeared with it. Henna, in her account, does not have a decorative function, but draws on popular belief in its prophylactic and apotropaic properties. The bride is covered with henna because it imparts divine blessing (baraka) and protection at a critical moment of live transition. (Kapchan, 1996:159)

In another view, solid henna is distinguished from naqsh, defined in Chapter 1 as painting, inscription, or engraving — writing. The contrast of color and writing suggests some of the other grand dichotomies that have interested anthropologists — nature:culture, rural:urban, female:male. Abdelhai Diouri suggests that life stage rules and the structural use of solid and decorative henna during different life stage rituals reinforce essential categories:

> ... henna marking is distinct from marking with tattoos: henna signals a transitory state (usage in rites of passage, agrarian rites, etc.), in contrast with tattooing which presents the signs of a stable identity (used to indicate consanguine or tribal membership, for the eradication of a sickness that is thought to return otherwise). Yet, in itself, henna

> incorporates a range of no less significant oppositions: to dye oneself with henna or not reveals the female versus male opposition, or, sacred period of a rite versus non-sacred period. Different forms of henna dyeing reveal different statuses: hands and feet dyed versus hands only reveals the opposition between married woman and young girl, uniform application versus decorative application reveals the opposition between negative rites (addressing death, birth, djinns [spirits]) vs positive rites (marriage, circumcision, 'Ashura, etc). (Diouri, 1997:148, my translation)

Tourist henna incorporates only the positive rites, following Diouri's interpretation, and blurs the essential statuses: male or female, virgin or woman.

Blessing and the disposal of substances

Although neither tourist sector artisans nor local sector artisans currently observe taboos relating to the disposal of used henna, some people have knowledge of the earlier existence of such practices. One young woman said that people are supposed to not throw out henna with the garbage, but put it somewhere, such as a corner of the house, or a niche in the wall. These practices reveal something of the nature of henna: like a few other substances, its essence is sacred. Aline Tauzin's account of henna practices in contemporary Mauritania refers to similar beliefs and practices. She writes,

> After removing it, for example, a woman does not throw out the "henna without juice," which has dried on her hands. She hurries to give it to servants and to children — but those whose father is still alive should not touch it —, who will get some more color from it. Furthermore, she gives it to the demons, to those who are known in Mauritania as the "people of the desert." To do this, she throws it to the north, where they live, while pronouncing words that aim to appease their anticipated jealousy. This henna, she says to them, is to dye the tails of their horses, to make them beautiful. She takes care to share with them this object of adornment, so as to defuse acts by which they could take revenge for having been kept away and for feeling jealous of it. (Tauzin, 1998:19, my translation)

In Islamic tradition, many objects are sacred. Arabic Qurans, for instance, are sacred. "Don't touch it if you are not clean," Amina told me one day. "You should never touch a Quran if you are having your period, or if you have had sex. You should ask

someone else to move it if you have to clean the room. But the one in English is okay to touch because it is not the real Quran." Muslims believe that the Qur'an was spoken in Arabic by God to Muhammad, and written down without error by his companions. It is sacred because it is the literal word of God. Other objects are also sacred, though, and deserve other forms of respect.

Niches in the walls that line narrow streets in the medina (old urban neighborhood) sometimes hold small bits of bread. I often wondered where it came from. Bread is the basis of most meals, and in many households, one or more meals each day is composed of bread and oil. When the meal includes another dish, it is served in a communal bowl and accompanied by wedges of bread. Round loaves are broken into wedges by one of the women of the household, and distributed to other members who tear off the small pieces that are dipped into oil, sauce, or broth in the communal dish. It is sacred because it sustains. Many people won't throw out bread that remains on the table at the end of a meal, and instead put the leftover bread aside. In many households, this bread would be used in a dish called *tird*, or served again at a later meal, or it may be sold to a local merchant for use as animal feed. The bread that was placed in wall niches was what remained from meals eaten in the street or in shops by workers and others who didn't return home for their afternoon meals.

Henna seen in a similar way was sacred because of its role in so many protective rituals. Ghalia, a young woman, told me that you should never throw out henna once you have taken it off your hands. "It is something beautiful, something good. You shouldn't throw it in the garbage. It's like bread. You should put it aside, but not throw it in the garbage. Or down the drain. But no one does that now — people just take if off and throw it. But if you want to know what you are supposed to do, you shouldn't really

throw it out." Where should you put it, I asked. "Maybe in a corner of the house, or on the wall. You shouldn't really take it off in the hammam either, except for the henna before the wedding." Why shouldn't you do that, I asked. "Because there is something about it that is beautiful. You shouldn't do something bad with it," she said. Nonetheless, as Ghalia said, few people worry about how they disposed of henna, even though they continue to speak about it as a respected, sacred thing. Women scrape it onto the ground after it has dried, or wash it off into a drain in the street or in the home.

Tourist sector designs

Neither tuurida nor skotsh have been commoditized in the local sector, or in the tourist market. Tourist sector artisans offer a selection of designs for potential customers to browse through, and browsers comment as they quickly flip through the book. Comments I noted include statements such as, "Less crowded than that", "Something small", "Something delicate", "A little flower here, and that's it." Others asked for a pen and paper and drew a quick sketch of the design they had in mind. Some designs are North American interpretations of other Eastern graphic morphemes such as Chinese and Sanskrit calligraphy. Others are influenced by the graphic vocabulary of Moroccan tourist art, including Berber crosses and Moorish arches. These designs make reference to the African identity of Morocco that is sought after by some tourists, a theme that is reproduced and appears in the interior design of many tourism facilities, including restaurants, boutique hotels, and some souvenir shops. In fact, the marrakshi style of henna, the one that is described by women as "traditional" (*taqliidi*), and is used most frequently at weddings, has many similarities with the decorative arts of the Fulani, a nomadic group that inhabits parts of Niger and Nigeria. Cornelius Adepegba argues that

the geometric border patterns and divided planes that are common features of both Fulani and Moroccan Berber decorative arts are attributable to a likely North African origin of the Fulani.[25]

Images and visual guides

Local sector artisans most often construct designs without the aid of pictures, though the bride and artisan may discuss various parts of the design as it is being constructed.[26] By contrast, tourist sector artisans rely on photographs (or, less commonly, drawings) to demonstrate their product to potential customers, and then, often to a lesser extent, as a guide during the construction of the design.

The most expensive resource for the artisan is the album of photographs that depicts different henna designs. In S-Suuq l-Qdiim, henna photographs are purchased from photo labs for 2.5 or 3 dirhams each. However this is a flexible expenditure. Photographs are stored in lightweight soft-cover albums that cost between 7 and 10 dirhams. While established artisans have one or even two albums which each contains up to 30 photographs, the most basic kit might include no photographs at all, or just one or two. Most cooperative groups observed have two albums of 10 to 15 photographs each that are shared by three or four people.

Albums organize and protect photos. Although the albums are not sturdy enough to prevent pages from being ripped out during periodic police harassment, the plastic sleeves protect the photos themselves from being torn. The plastic sleeves also protect photos from smudges of henna as artisans page through the albums to display designs.

Other henna images are available, although the tourist sector artisans do not

generally use them. Photocopies from design books are displayed at a number of shops that sell embroidery patterns and supplies and sell for several dirhams each. The design books themselves are also available, priced between 15 dirhams (for a book published in Egypt) and 400 dirhams (for a volume of Indian designs published in Britain). Some of the artisans are familiar with these books, but neither the books nor the photocopies are part of the kit that women assemble and bring with them each day. The photocopied sheets are too large to fit into albums.

Furthermore, drawings are less informative than photographs. Some foreign tourists appeared to be unfamiliar with henna, and asked if the artisans were applying permanent tattoos. When artisans queried, "Tatouage? Tatouage?" and held out syringes, some foreigners visibly recoiled, as if from the idea of acquiring a tattoo, another visible form of female body adornment. Artisans responded to questions with a demonstration of how henna is squeezed from the syringe into a fine thread that lies on the skin. The needle does not pierce, or even touch, the body.

Displaying designs to potential customers is the most important function of henna photographs. Artisans rely on these images to convey their product to potential clients. Although artisans try to show potential clients as many photographs as possible, borrowing books from other group members or from other groups if possible, they refrain from investing too much money in photographs. Albums are rarely more than half filled. This is the artisan's greatest investment in her kit, and the one most likely to be seized by police.

Most photos sold in S-Suuq l-Qdiim and nearby towns depict imarati variations, even though the geometric marrakshi style is what people told me is "the real henna from Morocco." The imarati style, said two women who worked in the traditional sector,

has only been used in S-Suuq l-Qdiim for a few years. "Is that why there are so many photos of it," I asked one day. "Yes," they said, "everyone knows what it is. You don't need a photo to do marrakshi."

In the local sector, henna artisans create marrakshi designs without referring to a visual guide. Photographs provide marrakshi variants however, such as alternate border forms like fidah, or new components like damya (checkerboard). No design photos showed rural henna styles, although I found one example of a template (skotsh) design that women in S-Suuq l-Qdiim identified as rural (see Figure 3.8).

Artisans who work in the traditional sector do not have large collections of design photos. Of ten traditional sector artisans for whom I have this data, four had one, two, or three photos that they carried with them. The remaining six artisans did not use photos. "You just ask what they want," said one woman. Artisans asked if the customer wanted marrakshi or khaliji (imarati) style, if they wanted a dense (*'aamr*) or light (khfif) design, and if they wanted the bottoms of the feet dyed. I observed that customers usually described what they wanted, drawing imaginary lines on the left hand with the index finger of the right hand, indicating especially how far up the wrist they wanted the design to extend. An excerpt from my fieldnotes shows how one woman described the process of selecting a design:

> Patricia: Does this design have a name?
> Atiqa: It is the traditional Moroccan design.
> P: But it's a bit different, I think. The way it comes in a 'V'.
> A: Oh, I asked for that. It reminded me of little gloves.

Color

In the local sector, henna can be a shade of red (varying from yellow to brown,

depending on how long it has been left on the skin, or less intentionally, how old the henna is), it can be black, or it can be a combination of both red and black. Both black and red and black are used primarily for imarati designs.

Reddish shades are most common in S-Suuq l-Qdiim, although the different techniques for making black are known by some artisans. In 2000 and 2001, two techniques were used to produce a black dye for the skin. The first, initially quite rare, is the unsafe PPD-laced imported henna discussed in Chapter 2. It was used by several tourist sector artisans, and although it is widely used by artisans in East Africa for domestic customers, it had not been adopted by in the local sector in the areas where I worked. Instead, the preferred technique was a two-step process that involved applying a design with henna, waiting for it to dry, then removing the paste and applying a thick coat over the entire area of a second paste that was obliquely called *argile* (Fr., clay).

The dissimulation of the ingredients of this paste has two potential motives. First, artisans are reticent about trade secrets. The ingredients of this paste are well-known in some regions, but not in S-Suuq l-Qdiim, and hence those artisans who know how to create black henna with the argile have a market advantage. The relative ease with which basic henna techniques can be learned increases the salience of any specialized knowledge.

The second reason for secrecy about the composition of the paste has to do specifically with the characteristics of the consumer base. While Moroccan customers rarely question artisans about the safety of henna products, except for the presence of paint thinner in henna that will be applied to young children, foreigners frequently ask about additives. As a result, some artisans have stopped putting paint thinner in their henna, while others (believing that paint thinner is harmless and is necessary for the

desirable strong and dark color) have simply denied using it. The characterization of the paste that turns henna black as argile is similar. Argile is a mixture of dry Portland cement, water, and ammonium chloride (NH_4CL), which is locally known as *shnaadr*. Ammonium chloride is bought from a hardware store in a highly concentrated form, and looks like a hard white block. Artisans chip of a tablespoon or so of shnaadr, pulverize it, mix it with the cement, and add water to create a paste. The resulting paste smells acrid, ammonia-like, and often provokes questions from customers about its ingredients. No artisan I observed revealed to customers how the paste was made, and some lied outright, saying that it was made from natural ingredients, "kinds of earth." To me, several artisans justified this practice of dissimulation by saying that the paste was harmless, and that the tourists only want black henna and that is the only way that it can be made.[27] In this respect, like the design photos that the artisans asserted depicted henna they had applied themselves, the argile is embedded in a system in which foreign customers measure authenticity by standards that were external to the system. Tourists' desire for black far superseded the local popularity of black henna, and suggests a link to Western tattoo practices. This interpretation is given weight by the similarity in placement (especially shoulder and lower back) and designs requested by tourists.

After-care

While black henna is less popular locally than red, a number of practices affect henna's natural color and the durability of the design.[28] Durability, for instance, is a function of the freshness of the paste and proper aftercare. While a single application of freshly made henna paste can last a month with the proper care, two-day-old paste produces a stain that lasts no longer than several days. Some artisans are careful to tell

customers not to wash their hands before the next day, even after scraping off the dried henna paste. This step is considered to produce the deepest color.

Among South Asians in New York, rapid fading of a bride's henna is taken as an indication of mistreatment by her new husband: "If the dye disappears in less than a month, he is believed to have required her to engage too soon in menial household tasks" (Gorfan, Young, and Kapchan, 1996:81). For Moroccan artisans, however, the color and durability of a design is a measure by which an artisan's skill is determined and advertised. The examination of my hands each time I had new henna, coupled with questions about who did it and when, and whether or not I washed my hands too quickly afterward, was a demonstration of how important these characteristics are in establishing an artisan's reputation. This practice also drew my attention to techniques used to improve color and durability, and to the woman's role in caring for her hennaed body.

After henna has dried but before it begins to flake off, another product may be applied sparingly to the design. Artisans and clients say that this darkens the color. In effect, what it seems to do is adhere the henna to the skin so that the colorant will remain in contact with skin cells for a longer period of time. Products that are applied to the skin after the henna has been removed include Vaseline (in Lamu, Kenya, see Young, 1992:17), as well as perfume and perfume oil.

In S-Suuq l-Qdiim and elsewhere in Morocco, the most common product applied to dried henna is a mixture called *sqwa*. Sqwa comes from a root that means to water, to wash, and to rinse. Sqwa is made in the home, either by one of the women of the household, by the henna artisan, or by her assistant if she has one. The basic recipe is the juice of one lemon, several crushed or minced cloves of garlic, a few tablespoons of

granulated (white) sugar, and a few pinches of crushed black pepper. If the sqwa is being prepared for a bride, the garlic is omitted because its smell is considered unpleasant. Some artisans include additional ingredients that they say darkens the color. One woman adds a small bit of ground cloves (the dark brown dried flower buds of *Eugenia aromatica*); another said that she used ground wild ginseng. Both spices add a pleasant odor that masks the earthy smell of garlic and henna.

In some households, sqwa is replaced by mint tea. Moroccan mint tea is made from boiling water, a few tablespoons of imported Chinese green tea, a handful of fresh mint leaves and stems, and about a cup of sugar. As it cools, mint tea begins to thicken and become sticky, much like the sugar- and lemon-based sqwa. Like sqwa, it prevents henna from flaking off the skin. It forms a sticky layer that protects the henna until it is scraped off with a knife blade. Both sqwa and tea are applied with a rag or piece of cotton soaked in the liquid and then dabbed on the henna. The hennaed skin may also be wrapped with unrolled cotton balls, toilet paper, or plastic bags.

Aesthetics guidelines: Form and function

As I mentioned at the outset of this chapter and in Chapter 1, every time I had new henna designs, the artisans I visited most frequently would take my hands, examine the henna, then ask me who did the designs and when. This allowed them to know who else I was spending time with, and how often. However, this practice allowed me to gather information about their standards — what they thought was good work, and why. Coupled with the more explicit lessons in henna application, I was able to put together a set of principles that guided the tourist sector henna work.

The first characteristic that women commented on was the color of the henna

stain. Artisans judged good quality henna by its color and durability. Good henna was supposed to be dark and rich in pigment. On my fair skin, "good" color was burgundy, tending toward brownish-orange where the skin was drier, and almost blackish on my fingertips and palms. When I had henna of this quality, some artisans with whom I had regular visits would, upon seeing me cross the square, call me over to show this color to potential customers. Poor quality henna is less richly pigmented, lighter in color, and tending more toward orange and yellow than red or brown.

Aesthetics is the systematic evaluation of what is perceived through the senses, primarily visual and aural, but also through taste, touch, and smell.[29] It also implies a shift in perspective, from function to form. The presentation of the role of henna in Moroccan social life in Chapter 2 highlights its instrumentality. Its decorative role at birth, circumcision, weddings, and death is secondary to its function of mediating role change: marking the actor who is undergoing transition, marking life crises, and governing safe movement through these psychic passages.

In this emphasis on function, henna fits into an approach to expressive culture in which decoration is not superior to utility. In describing urban embroidery in Morocco, J. Jouin writes "Moroccans have never considered the world as a show: if they love flowers, it is for the perfume more than for beauty; if they love trees, it is for shade rather than for the charm they give to the countryside" (Jouin, 1932:20). What this suggests is not a lack of aesthetic sense, but rather a structure of meaning that encompasses more than sight. The commoditization of henna in the tourist market risks reducing the value of henna practices, otherwise layered with signification drawn from context, to a measure of technical proficiency.

Conclusion

Technical aspects of henna work such as mixing paste and preparing both syringes and needles demonstrate distinct material traditions, that is, characteristic choices that reflect processes of knowledge acquisition through formal and informal learning. Technical traditions determine some of the variation in the characteristics of henna produced by tourist sector and local sector artisans.

Tourist sector artisans also offered henna styles that were not part of the traditional repertoire. Innovation occurred in several categories: motif, site of application, and social rules. All three sites of innovation were spurred by tourist demand, and clearly influenced by North American body modification practices of the late 1990s and the early 2000s. Western tattoo art trends also influenced tourists' requests for designs in areas that are not commonly decorated with henna. These included geometric and figurative medallions (especially scorpions) that were applied to the bicep, shoulder blade, belly, and lower back, as well as band designs that were applied to the ankle, wrist, and upper arm.

An important trend that has emerged from tourist demand is the increasing use of black henna by Moroccan artisans. A number of artisans use a two-step technique that employs a paste made from cement and ammonium chloride which is applied to an area after the dried henna paste has been removed. However, both the suspect ammonia smell of the paste and the time required for this process motivate artisans to search for another method of producing black henna. One increasingly available alternative is a commercially prepared henna mix containing PPD, a highly allergenic dye intended for use on hair; linked to effects from dermatitis to muscle death (following ingestion), this product has been widely condemned as a public health risk.

[1] Even a small amount of water contributes to the decay of lawsone, the molecule found in henna leaves that enables henna to produce a deep and durable dye.
[2] By contrast, black henna has been used in other regions for some time. Black or "peacock" (*nyeusi*) henna, a product imported from Japan that contains black hair dye, was commonly used in Lamu, Kenya, as early as the 1990s (Young, 1992:17). Moderate to severe dermatological and systemic reactions to PPD have been reported in the medical literature for East Africa. (See Hashim, Hamza, Yahia et al, 1992, for comprehensive accounts of henna-related PPD poisoning in the Sudan.)
[3] In the Mauritanian henna technique described by Alice Tauzin, a fixative imported from the United Arab Emirates has been added to the henna paste since the late 1980s (Tauzin 1998:39).
[4] By way of contrast, hot water is often preferred. See, for instance, Wazan, 1912:126-127, and Bourilly, 1932:61-63.
[5] Bhanawat (1976:8) mentions Indian artisans' preference for a bowl of bismuth or stainless steel.
[6] Artisans acquired these bags in different ways, and sometimes discussed how to get more of them. While they asked merchants to give them one or two when they purchased groceries, more commonly they purchased them from the fruit merchants a few at a time. One artisan located a business supply store that sold the bags by the kilogram, allowing her to buy them at the much discounted price of 20 dirhams per kilogram.
[7] Tourist sector henna use typical urban techniques. Women in rural areas, on the other hand, do not have a supply of syringes that could be used for henna designs. An American rural health care worker told me that young women in her small mountain village frequently asked if she would bring them syringes for henna parties when she returned from town.
[8] The symbolic function of henna syringes was first suggested to me by Catherine Cartwright Jones (personal communication, October 2001). The powerful symbolism of Western biomedicine has been incorporated into health practices in many societies. See for instance, Greene, 1998, on the use of hypodermic needles by shamans in Peru, and Ayora-Diaz, 2000, on the medicalization of traditional healing practices in Chiapas, Mexico.
[9] Eighteen gauge hypodermic needles acquired in Canada cannot be bent back and forth and broken in this way. I have been successful, however, after using a wire cutter to first score the needle, then using pliers to bend the needle back and forth.
[10] Moroccans, like other Middle Easterners, are fastidious about removing their shoes on entering a home; synecdochically, the street is the source of this dirt. The implications of this structure eluded me for some time. Out of consideration, I refused to use a stool when there weren't enough for the assembled group of artisans, clients, and friends. I instead sat on the asphalt on a piece of cardboard pressed upon me by one of the artisans, or on an old leather bag that I brought with me each day and kept my notebooks in. Initially, I sat directly on the asphalt, but stopped doing this after I realized how much this behavior disgusted others. Sitting on my bag was judged not quite as bad, since the consensus among the artisans was that this bag was quite ugly. The asphalt did not apparently dirty either the bag or my clothes. In retrospect, I realize that I probably should not have used the absence of visible dirt as my guide. My tolerance of "dirt," exemplified by sitting on the asphalt, suggesteds a problematic blurring of the essential categories of home and street (Kelly Spurles, 2003b, 2003c), and hence affronts the social order (Douglas, 1966).
[11] Tourists' presence is noticeable, yet while this area has the highest concentration of

international tourists in the city, particularly in the evening, they are relatively few in comparison to local residents.

[12] See also Howes, 1996.

[13] It is interesting to note a contrasting practice in Mauritania. Aline Tauzin describes how henna is applied to baby girls on a single hand and foot, both on the same side, from the time they are 40 days old:

> Such coloring is called *shekkel*, a substantive formed from a verb meaning "to restrain an animal by tying the forefoot to the hind foot". Furthermore, the henna is not left long on the skin, so that the color remains light. The body of the girl is adorned, beautified, but only half. To dye all her extremities, as to obtain a saturated red, synonym of great beauty, would risk attracting competition, that is to say, the evil eye, and to endanger her. It is permitted to let henna darken on the skin of a girl, but without drawing the simplest motif, only when she has reached the age where her hair is dressed in braids on her head. That is also the age of marriage, that of a charm which, at this time, must fulfil its role. (Tauzin, 1998:20, my translation)

[14] See, for example, the discussions in Hoodfar, 1997; Lindisfarne-Tapper and Ingham, 1997; and Hoodfar, 2003.

[15] Decorative motifs found of the calabash utensils of the Fulani in Niger and Nigeria are named after the "the local face markings that they resemble, and after their position on the face" (Adepegba, 1995:10).

[16] Field does not offer examples of the text he observed. I inquired about this practice following a presentation of my research at a forum whose audience included several middle-aged Iranian men. They expressed surprise at this practice, and suggested that it was likely lines of poetry, or perhaps the personal names of the bride and groom as in neighboring India. They rejected the idea that Qur'anic text would be used in henna designs applied to the body, since this would involve exposing the text to ritual impurity.

[17] This is a common characteristic of nasab. To take a well-known example, the thirteenth century mystic poet Jalal al-Din al-Rumi was known as "the Roman" despite his birth in the Persian city of Balkh, because he once lived in the Turkish city Konya, called Rum ("Rome") because of its Byzantine past.

[18] The use of nasab for henna designs indicates the importance of nasab (the identification of self with place) in Arab society generally, and in urban Morocco, particularly, just as the use of fictive kinship terms (such as *khuya*, my brother) for neighbors and friends highlights the importance of kin relations.

[19] Noting a similar lack of concern with the explicit meaning of each symbol among Turkman rug-makers, Brian Spooner writes,

> The original meanings of the decorative elements have been largely forgotten by the people who weave them (who probably think about their work in terms that would not provide answers to Western queries about meaning) and must be reconstructed by Western specialists in order to rationalize their need for authenticity. (Spooner, 1986:199)

[20] Spooner's discussion of Turkman rugs is again relevant here. He notes that most Western

knowledge about Oriental carpets, regardless of how it is ultimately presented, is not based on ethnographic study of their production or use, but rather it is derived from dealers seeking to enhance the value of their products, and to distinguish some products from others. (Spooner, 1986:197-198)

[21] Skotsh patterns are durable goods that allow women to contribute to a friend's henna (and thus enhance both relationship and reputation) without additional expenditure. In this sense, the purchase of these templates constitutes an investment much like the purchase of durable consumer goods purchased and shared by low-income Egyptian women. (Hoodfar, 1997:204-209)

[22] A photograph of the hands of a female musician in Mauritania appears to depict resist dyeing. A single narrow (several millimeters) undyed band is present below the four fingers and thumb, while the center of the palm is decorated with a geometric medallion composed of uniformly sized squares, alternating between solid, solid with an undyed center, and undyed squares. Outside the medallion, the palm is solidly dyed. (Du Puigaudeau, 1970:fig. 81)

[23] These boxes have been found throughout sub-Saharan Africa, and are used to store valuable items, including tobacco. The boxes are made from cow leather that has been scraped and dried, then soaked in water and shaped over a clay mold (De Zeltner, 1932). Contemporary boxes appear to be made in the same fashion, as clay dust sticks to the interior walls of the boxes. The resist technique described by De Zeltner uses wax to create impermeable areas. While contemporary henna artisans have adapted their technique to incorporate bands of electrical or medical tape, box makers appear to have maintained the use of wax. One of the two boxes in my possession display clear (though small) traces of wax.

[24] Tauzin directs our attention to a brief 1949 article by Raymond Mauny, in which he notes the use of geometric designs in Mauritania. By contrast, he observed solid henna in North Africa. (Mauny, 1949)

[25] Were this similarity due to indirect diffusion, these traits would be more widely distributed throughout Niger and Nigeria, the present day region inhabited by the nomadic Fulani (Adepegba, 1995).

[26] Similarly, henna patterns are created without the use of visual guides (photographs or drawings) in Mauritania (Tauzin, 1998:40).

[27] Of course, harmful PPD-based black henna is a second method. It was rarely found at the time of these interviews. Ammonium chloride and cement do irritate the skin, as the long-term use by some artisans demonstrated. Vaseline and skin lotions were successfully used by some to combat drying and cracking.

[28] Tourist sector artisans drew my attention to the particular popularity of black henna with tourists. One noted, however, that black henna fades more quickly, and often turns greenish as it fades.

[29] Kanafani, 1983, summarizes the literature on aesthetics, particularly as it relates to the "lower" senses of touch, smell, and taste and their integration into social life in the United Arab Emirates. While a rich source of status for both men and women in the UAE, these latter faculties have been less developed into high-status art forms, particularly in North America and Europe, than have hearing and sight (compare cuisine and perfume with art and music, for example).

4
The social context of henna work

Introduction

In groups of two or three, sitting, standing, or walking around, the artisans chat while scanning for potential customers. Most of the women dress in workday jellabas, hooded polyester-blend robes worn by women and men in most Moroccan cities. Many artisans, young women as well as older ones, wear the hoods drawn up, covering the lower part of their faces with the black face veil called the *nigab*. This distinctive dress identifies them as tourist-sector henna artisans. The nigab is otherwise worn today only by older women (who wear it below rather than over the nose), and by female beggars (whose nigab, like their other clothing, is white, the color of mourning). It doesn't cover the face, but by hiding all but the eyes it effectively conceals the emotions.

All foreigners, both male and female, who enter the square are considered worthy of a pitch. Sometimes artisans jump to their feet and rush to greet each potential customer, while other times they remain seated and ambivalently hold out a small photo album and call out as foreigners pass. "Henné, madame? Faire un tatouage? C'est très joli. Noir." Ilham, who spoke phrases of several European languages, sometimes called out "Español? Italiano?" One day, I noted a conversation as they discussed the likely ethnicity of the tourists, trying to speak to them in a shared language. "What language do Greeks speak?" Ilham asked me. "What else besides Greek?"

As a small knot of potential customers entered the marketplace, women sitting and standing in several distinct clusters quickly reached for their albums and ran to meet the approaching customer. Some of them called out, "Henné, la gazelle?" A few of the

women jostled each other as they tried to gain the attention of the tourists. They formed a small group around the potential customers, slowing their progress. I remained seated, but could hear the loud conversation, "Vous voulez faire du henné? Un petit bracelet ici?" Ilham took the hand of one of the women in her own, and poised her henna syringe against the wrist, about to begin. "Combien vous voulez payer?" The woman protested, "Non, on va faire le tour, peut-etre demain." "Cinq minutes!" said Ilham, to the woman who had withdrawn her hand from the embrace. "Non, demain peut-etre," said the woman, walking on. Ilham followed her. "Alors, demain! Viens ici, au numero 60!" She pointed to an orange juice cart with a number 60 painted on a small wooden square that hangs from its canopy. The woman said okay, and continued on her way. Ilham ran back to the group. "I told her to come tomorrow to the number 60," she told us. "She won't come, I know her," said another woman. "That wasn't her," said Ilham. "That one was old, she was with her friend, a woman. This one is with her man." She asked me if this was the same woman that had passed by earlier. "I don't know," I said. "Look at that fat woman," Khaddouj said, changing the subject. "Ooh, she is fat. She is American, only Americans are fat like that. Are Canadians fat, Sharifa?" "Some are," I replied, "like Moroccans, maybe." Khaddouj nodded, and continued to watch them. "All of them are fat! Look at her, and that must be her mother, and her son. Look at their cameras. They are rich. Those are expensive cameras."

Ilham put down the sandwich she had started again to eat, slowly got up, and walked after the family, holding out her book. A large group entered the square from the gate behind us. About thirty people, they were following a middle-aged Moroccan man dressed in the typical state-licensed guide's outfit of a handsome ivory jellaba and yellow

slippers. Khaddouj called out to Ilham as she got up again, running quickly toward one of the foreign women who had paused to look at us.

In 2000 and 2001, about twenty women work full-time, coming each day before noon and leaving at 10 at night, or even later during the hottest part of the year when the square was most crowded after dark. Many others are part-time or occasional workers who come only for a few hours each evening, or only during the busiest time of the day. During the busiest evenings of the busiest days of the high tourist season, I counted more than seventy women and girls applying henna for tourists. In 1999, this phenomenon was said by local residents to be very new, only a few years old.

In this chapter, the analysis moves from the examination of the global context of tourism (Chapter 1), the cultural and historical context in which henna rituals are embedded (Chapter 2), and the technical changes emerging from tourist demand and globalization of tools and motifs (Chapter 3), to the structure of henna work and its location within society, as evident through the daily routines of the artisans. I show here that henna work involves social as well as technical knowledge, as evidenced, in part, by strategies such as cooperative groups and extended networks through which artisans maximize the extent to which they are able to draw advantages from the complex and shifting tourist sector.

Low-income women and employment

A general trend throughout the region has been the transition to a cash economy. The cash economy is not a gender-neutral space, but rather a communal production incorporating social and cultural content that recognizes gender as an important axis of organization and interpretation. In this context, men's cash contributions to the

household are valued and recognized, while women's contributions, which disproportionately take the form of reproductive and cash-economizing labor, tend to be taken for granted as part of women's "natural" role as nurturers.[1] This has important implications for women's status within the household, as power is correlated with recognized economic contributions (Friedl, 1978).

Many urban working class Moroccans state that a woman should not work outside the household except when economic necessity requires it. Gender roles in marriage include a division of labor that places men outside and women inside. One working class woman stated, "The ideal wife is the one who aspires to protect herself in the home, in the company of her children. The one who works is considered dishonest. Nonetheless, in my case, I have no choice." (Aboumalek, 1994:73, my translation) Work outside the home is not a generally valued choice for low-income women.

Decisions to earn cash are tempered not only by shared beliefs regarding modesty (understood in Morocco as respectful relations between the sexes rather than seclusion), but also by the exclusion of low-income women from many desirable job categories (teaching, pharmacy, medicine) because of their lack of training and of social connections. In one interview, Tasneem, a young woman who had persisted with her formal education and obtained a commercial diploma despite considerable hardship to her household, expressed desperation at her career possibilities. Her background resembles that of the henna artisans in all but her choice to continue her education. Like them, she is from a poor family that lacks a male breadwinner. Tasneem's story provides a backdrop against which to understand the economic choices of the henna artisans.

Tasneem lives with her mother and younger sister in what she describes as "the worst house" in her neighborhood, which is a new urban area. Her mother, who at 38 is

beginning to complain of headaches and sore joints, carries water and scrubs clients in their local hammam, where she earns about 300 dirhams a month in tips. Their house has two rooms, and they share an open foyer, a faucet and drain, and a squat toilet with Tasneem's half-brother (father's first wife's son) and his wife and infant daughter who live in a third room. The two families share some expenses, but find it difficult to remain on good terms because of disputes over contribution to the compound's water and electricity bills. With money so limited, both families have difficulty paying.

The walls are loosely plastered cinderblock, the roofs are makeshift and leaky, and the house contrasts markedly with the new good quality constructions that surround it. Tasneem's family doesn't hold the title to their land, but they own the house and that alone allows them to make do, however insecurely. Tasneem's mother is afraid that the city will expropriate the land to widen the path that passes by the house.

Tasneem works as a clerk seven days a week, six hours a day without a break, for 500 dirhams a month. She takes a communal taxi half an hour each way, every day to and from work, costing 150 dirhams a month. At work, she runs the shop, taking care of customers and taking in cash, and also cleans the shop before it opens. She told me that her employer wanted a girl to work during the day so she could do the cleaning too. She said,

> It is a good job, but it is hard work and it doesn't pay well. I come in the morning and I do the cleaning too. The money is very bad. I come at 9, I do the cleaning like a cleaning lady in the shop and in the shop above where they sell clothes. It belongs to the same owner. At first, I said no, I will clean at the shop, okay, but I don't want to do the cleaning in the other shop, and he said if you don't like it, get out of here, there are people who want work, people who want this job.

In fact, despite her education, she earns the same salary as an illiterate housemaid. Learning to speak French would increase her employability, and although

she has tried to teach herself French from a book, she has given up each time, saying that it is not French that keeps her from a better job. Instead, she says, she lacks connections. She continued,

> Let me explain this to you first. First, if you want a position, something good, you have to pay a bribe. There is someone, like an agent, like the man you go to to rent a house, and he is just for the small jobs in the government, like the police, or work cleaning an office, things like that. You give him money and he looks around for a position for you. Every job has its price, depending on how well it pays. From 200,000 riyals [10,000 dirhams, or about one thousand US dollars] and up. You pay more for jobs that have a higher salary. But if you just want something normal, then you talk to people, you say hello to them everyday, get to know them, and see if they can find something for you. That is for the regular jobs, the ones that pay just 500 dirhams a month, things in a store or in a beauty shop. For a job with a good salary, you have to pay the agent. Maybe you will get something, and then he can have an offer for that job from someone else, and he can get you put out and he will put someone else there. Even if you have a paper from him, stamped, saying that you paid him such and such amount, if you show that to the government they will just say that this doesn't exist, and that you are lying because it is illegal. He will lie and say that he is an important person and would never do anything like that because he works in the parliament and is a very big person in this country and you are a nobody and a liar.

Many times, she told me that maybe she will just stop trying for a better job and work in the hammam with her mother. Women's choices to work as henna artisans who earn cash within the tourist sector should be understood in this context.

Work and home

Most of the henna artisans are in their 20s and 30s, a smaller proportion are teenagers, and several are between 8 and 12 years of age. There are a number of women in their mid 40s. The oldest is Khaddouj, who has worked at the square for twenty years.[2] She explained her situation to me:

> Patricia: You have your daughter and your son. Why do you go out to work?

> Khaddouj: My daughter isn't at home anymore, she went to Casablanca. And my son works in tourism. But it isn't enough. It isn't enough.
>
> P: He works in tourism? What does he do? There is supposed to be money in tourism!
>
> K: No, he makes things and sells them to shops. He doesn't make enough money that way.

Khaddouj continued, telling me how her daughter and son-in-law had bought a 16 inch television, and a new fridge for which they had paid 2500 dirhams. Her income had permitted this, and secured her position in the household.

The youngest artisans still live at home, usually with several siblings and a widowed or divorced mother. Teenagers and never-married women also live at home, in a similar family situation. Many of these artisans work only occasionally, and often on the hottest nights when it is unpleasant to be in the small one-room apartments poor families rented.[3] For them (as for the others), the plaza provides an opportunity to make money while enjoying its entertainment and fresh air.

Henna work enabled low-income women to cope with large or sudden expenses. The morning of 'Iid l-Kbir, I walked across the empty square at 9 am to get a place in one of the collective taxis going south of the city so that I could spend the holiday with a family I often visited. I was surprised to see one woman sitting on a stool, dressed in her dirty work clothes, when such few others as were in the street were dressed in their holiday best and going off to celebrate. She kissed me, and we wished each other a happy 'Iid. She was going to work only a few hours, she said, just until one in the afternoon, then she was going to go home and celebrate with her children. There were still tourists in town, she noted, and because of the holiday there was almost nothing for them to do but walk around, so she thought she would be able to make some money. "I spent all my

money on the ram for my children's 'Iid," she added, "I have to work now. But it's no problem."[4]

Most of the older artisans, though not all, are themselves divorced or widowed. Some divorced women worked only temporarily as henna artisans, and left the trade when their husband revoked the divorce. A few of the henna artisans are married. Some are married to men who are habitual gamblers, drinkers or hash smokers, and who work little or not at all, never earning enough to support their families.[5] One artisan told me one day that she had been going to court to get a divorce, and would finally, that day, she thought, be free.

Moroccans with whom I shared my analysis frequently affirmed my observation that the female artisans are often sole wage-earners who support their families. However, their analysis went further, as they contended that few women would otherwise want to or be allowed to perform such work. Discussing the family situation of one of the artisans, one woman told me, "Fatna's father is dead; otherwise she would not work in the plaza. All the girls' fathers are dead." Some of the girls' fathers are dead, but not all. This fiction, however, enables outsiders to make sense of a choice that was otherwise incomprehensible to them. Indeed, most women (such as Tasneem) without wage-earning fathers or brothers choose not to work in the plaza, despite the rumours of high wages. Tasneem, in fact, was very curious about the henna artisans, particularly about what they were like and if they were nice people. I assured her that they were, just as she was. She mulled over what I told her, but clearly the social cost would be too great. "I always walk quickly when I have to go through there. Or I go around, the long way," she said one day.

Several authors have noted that Middle Eastern women are reluctant to discuss cash-earning activities carried out in the home, as this economic role is perceived to have the potential to negatively affect the husband's honor (e.g. Meneley, 1994; White, 1994; Hoodfar, 1997). I found no such reluctance on the part of low-income Moroccan women, who are, in fact, proud of their earning capacity and frequently asserted that I too should be economically independent. However, women are very concerned with the conditions under which they work. This not only explains why comparatively few women choose to engage in henna work in the tourist sector, but also highlights the importance of the artisans' discourse regarding the benefits of tourist sector work, which they clearly perceived and described differently from those women who rejected it.

In fact, across the Middle East, women rarely work in contexts where they have "indiscriminate contact with outsiders" (Moghadam, 1993:52).[6] Where women do work in these contexts that are considered unacceptable by wider society, as in Willy Jensen's study of divorced and widowed women and their daughters in an Algerian village, they are often already marginal, typified by Jansen's "women without men" whose social and economic precariousness has the Pyrrhic advantage of considerable freedom (Jansen, 1987). In urban Morocco, divorced or widowed women (31.2 percent) are statistically more likely than married (16.1 percent) or single (13.4) women to work outside the home in jobs that report statistics to the census bureau (Morocco, 1992:141). Divorced and widowed women are most likely to work if they are younger: 54.7 percent of divorced and widowed women between 15 and 24 work outside the home, as do 59.4 percent of divorced and widowed women between 25 and 44 (Morocco, 1992:142).

While many of the henna artisans are women without men, in other cases, they belong to households whose male wage-earner is unable to support the household on

his wage alone. Some of the henna artisans are married to men who work at low-paying jobs nearby. Samira was 42 and had four children with her husband, who worked in the chicken market. "It's dirty," she said, "but it's work. He isn't paid by the month — he's paid by the day. And so sometimes it's 30 dirhams, sometimes 50, sometimes nothing." Her income (70 dirhams a day, and more in the high season) contributed to the cost of sending their oldest son to Italy. The process of obtaining papers and passage (through a Moroccan mediator) had cost them 70 000 dirhams, almost two years' salary (3200 dh/month) for a government worker and nearly twelve years' salary (500 dh/month) for women like Tasneem who work as shop clerks, household maids, commercial cleaners, or laundresses.

Omayma was very religiously devout. Divorced with a small child when I first met her, she celebrated a second marriage during my fieldwork. Her new husband was one of the snake charmers who worked nearby. They came to know each other there, and he saw that she was a good Muslim and wanted to marry her, she said. She continued to work there after her marriage, since, she said, he knew she did that when he met her. Her situation contrasted dramatically with public opinion, which I gauged by the denigrating comments of my neighbors and acquaintances.

Women without men, however, are not women without family. Of 20 artisans for whom I have this data, only one woman maintained a single-person household. All others lived with kin (mother, adult children, sibling) in an extended household, in a nuclear household with spouse and children (no married artisan was childless), or, in one case, with an unrelated female neighbor who was otherwise alone as well. The single woman who lived alone relied on her mother for help with childcare, but lived on her own. Although women often perform some household tasks (especially cooking and

baking bread) before beginning what would be a second shift of work, the amount of time spent by full-time workers outside the home means that the maintenance of a multi-person household is necessary for the accomplishment of the cash-saving labor essential to low-income families' survival. A functionalist explanation such as this can be further supported by the predominant ideology of the community: communal life is considered to be healthier physically, and morally superior to living alone. I return to these themes further on.

Earning and spending

The cash-earning potential of henna work was emphasized to me by women who chose this occupation. Hannan, who took a particular interest in my research and on many occasions explicitly presented her own analysis and history of the trade, said that I should learn how to do henna not just to understand it anthropologically, but in order to do it in Canada. "You never know what will happen," she said, "but with some money in the bank it will be better. Buy yourself a house."

Indeed, Mbarka pointed to a woman one afternoon, criticizing her. "You see all those keys she has? Why does she need to do henna? I have no husband, and no house," she complained. However, economically stable henna artisans — those with resources such as a house — were uncommon, and I never saw the woman with the keys again. Perhaps Mbarka's interpretation was wrong, and this woman's situation was not as it seemed.

Women who became tourist sector artisans emphasized their wage-earning capacity and their independence. Notwithstanding neighbors' opinions about their morality and occasional attempts by police to reduce the number of unlicensed

entrepreneurs in the market, henna artisans decide when and how they would work. Nelson Graburn draws our attention to the similarly self-directed nature of home-based production for the tourist market among Inuit carvers in the Canadian Arctic. Although, when calculcated on an hourly basis, wages are relatively low, workers retain control of their conditions much as they would in the traditional subsistence economy (Graburn, 1999:335-336). For Moroccan henna artisans, who (with other Moroccans, male and female) value the capacity to retain control of daily activities and working hours for practical as well as psychological reasons, this is an important advantage over factory work.

Retaining control is an important consideration in another respect as well. Young girls from low-income families are often placed as live-in maids in homes where they work long hours (often five AM to eleven PM or midnight), helping the female head of household and providing companionship. Cash wages are low, since the value of the child's labor is considered less than an adult's, and wages incorporate non-cash remuneration in the form of clothing and lodging.[7] These wages are paid directly to the child's father.[8]

By contrast, young girls and adolescents working as henna artisans control their own incomes, and while they contribute to the household pool, they withhold some for personal spending on sweets and fashionable clothing. This situation contrasts markedly with the Middle Eastern norm in which men's control over the material conditions of the cash economy allows them to "act as an intermediary between women producers and the market place where the products are sold." (Afshar, 1985:ix) Nonetheless, as shall be discussed in this and the following chapter, there are attempts to draw some of women's income away through the control of their access to physical space.

The importance of control over working conditions, including income, is significant. Tourist sector artisan arrive after caring for household duties, take time off when necessary to attend family or neighborhood functions, work longer hours when they have greater cash needs, and choose to sit in a shaded area or stay home when the heat is great and there are few customers. The artisans have this freedom because they work independently, each one owning her materials outright. This freedom also allows artisans to employ strategies to re-create a social system in which they have support and resources, improve their working conditions, and maximize their profits. The spatial, temporal, social, and technical aspects of their work, and the strategies employed in these areas by henna artisans, are discussed in the following sections.

Spatial organization

The spatial organization of henna work is fundamentally established by the architecture of the square, which is a large asphalt space with streets opening into it and along it. One long curved segment of its perimeter is created by bi-directional flows of heavy traffic composed of small and large taxis, mopeds, bicycles, donkey carts, mule teams and wagons, horse-drawn carriages, small and large delivery trucks, handcarts, charter buses, and private cars. While some of the traffic continues from the square into the narrow streets of the medina, much of it stops to unload passengers or goods, then turns in the traffic circle at the northeast corner, returns along the perimeter, and leaves. During the day, when the area is much less congested with pedestrians, mopeds and bicycles cross the square willy-nilly, emphasizing how local traffic flows across the square as residents go to and from daily chores in this densely populated area of the city.

Tourists also cross the square as they travel a well-established route that takes them from one popular site to another, and finally back to their hotels or buses after an afternoon of shopping in the souqs.[9] The entrances to the souqs are located at the ends of the square. Several of the groups I spent much time with work in the same area near one of these entrances. People who enter from this busy spot pass through a gap between the carts at the corner of the square that is about fifteen feet wide, and tend to proceed diagonally across the square. Several artisans place their stools along the initial stretch of this Gulf stream of tourists, which is close to the shade and conviviality of the carts, and as far as possible from the cloud of smog created by the heavy motor traffic.

Other groups establish themselves in other areas. Those near the center of the square for instance, cross to the perimeter on foot to greet potential customers who enter from that direction. When the square is sparsely populated in the afternoons, artisans respect the territory close to established groups, and do not approach tourists who walk near another group without asserting a prior agreement with the customer. In the evenings however, when the square is more crowded with tourists and space is limited, artisans work much closer to each other, in the spaces between and around other merchants.

Groups collectively maintain an area that has been transformed into a domestic space by the addition of several low stools and a few bags of equipment, but also by the sedimented actions of the artisans who regularly occupy this space, turning it into a named and identifiable area. They arrange their bags of equipment and stools to exclude competitors and strangers, and speak of each other's habitual area as their home — saying, for instance that someone has gone to "Khaddouj's place" as *'ind Khaddouj*, in the same fashion whether they are referring to her home or to her place on the pavement.

A small number of artisans walk about, scanning for clients, and often working quickly and standing up when they conclude a sale. All but a few of the full-time artisans were "sedentary," by contrast, moving throughout the day along a known trajectory, and remaining seated for the most part. Emphasizing the extent to which their daily activities were regularly observed by workmates and neighboring merchants, they often contrasted their behavior with that of the mobile artisans:

> "How can I be dishonest," Amal said, "when everyone knows where to find me? The ones who are always going in circles, no. If someone has a problem with them, they run. Fsst!"

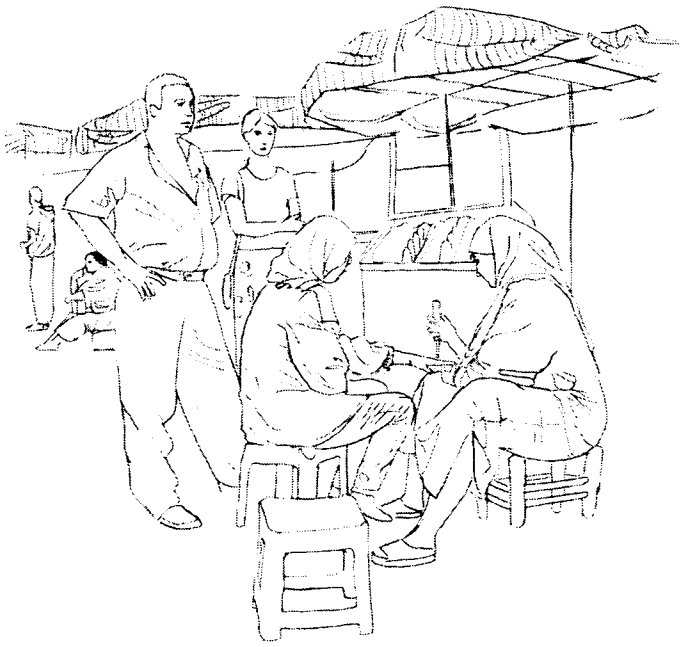
This comparison demonstrates a strategy through which artisans recognize and deflect criticism of their business practices as well as their moral standing.

Temporal organization

Work in this sector is governed by temporal patterns on micro and macro levels, as tourism follows seasonal patterns. While the climate in fall and early spring is pleasantly balmy rather than cold and damp or terrifically hot, the high tourist season is in July and especially August. These months coincide with the school and work vacation periods in Europe, which provide the largest proportion of tourists to Morocco. The August peak occurs when French workers take their annual month of vacation. Moroccans working in France, Spain, Italy, and elsewhere in Europe tend to visit at this time in a return migration of such scale it provokes government planning.[10] Many businesses, and the henna artisans as well, also plan on this peak to make up for slow months during the winter. During the high tourist season, many women who are not regularly involved in the henna trade join the numbers who work at the plaza, earning money for fall expenses that include new clothing and gifts occasioned by family or neighborhood weddings and circumcisions, large household appliances (purchased at

special markets for goods brought from Europe by returning Moroccan workers), and books and clothing for school-age children. Even those who work regularly in order to support their households work longer hours in the summer, knowing that their income in the winter will be meager, or at least unpredictable. One artisan explained to me that she earned a great deal some days during high season, and put most of the money in the bank, since in the winter she might make nothing for a week at a time.

Figure 4.1: Domestic tourist having henna applied



Here, an artisan applies henna to a domestic tourist as her father and sister look on. The father explained that they were visiting from the north for several days.

Drawing by Stephani Weirathmueller after photo by author.

Like other tourist sector workers, henna artisans are conscious of tourist flows, commenting on them constantly, and deploying strategies that take these fluctuations into consideration. Many women join the sector or worked additional hours when tourist levels are high. However, one of the artisans organized her work so as to avoid the highest peaks, when there are more customers as well as more henna artisans. Hannan, who was unmarried and lived alone, arrived late in the evening, after 9 pm, but stayed the latest, sometimes until 4 or 5 in the morning. She had no competition from other

artisans this late at night, and did henna for tourists returning after a late night at nightclubs and restaurants. After the restaurants were packed up and moved from the square after midnight, she sat at one of the all-night cafés, drinking coffee and talking with tourists.

The flow of traffic through the marketplace orders women's work throughout the day. Some groups of women are displaced from the center of the square to the periphery when their places are taken over each afternoon by merchants and male entertainers. Other groups move throughout the day according to a predictable schedule, sitting in one spot then moving to another as different locations in the square are occupied by succeeding groups, and as the patterns of tourist traffic shift away from the souq entrances and toward the temporary stalls.[11] These patterns are disrupted only by serious fights between group members, or by police interventions. These subjects are treated in the following section.

Social organization

Corporations and cooperative groups

In many Middle Eastern societies and for many centuries, work has been marked by the presence of guilds or corporations. These bodies supervise training and production of their members, channel official business (including taxation) between citizens and government, serve as a medium through which craftsmen (often related as well by ethnic or geographic ties) participate as an organized body in public life, and constitute networks through which individuals engage in social activities and extend mutual aid.[12]

While these associations are primarily masculine in membership, henna artisans are known to have organized a professional corporation in Tunis (Vonderheyden,

1934a:47). Contemporary local sector wedding specialists (*ngayef*) in Morocco who rent wedding outfits and furniture as well as organize sub-contractors (which include henna artisans) also maintain professional associations that regulate disputes between their members and clients, although there is no similar association that represents henna artisans (either in the local sector or in the tourist sector) themselves. One local sector artisan told me that there is no need for a nqqaashas' guild, since they provide services for people that they know, and not for strangers. If there were to be a problem, she said, that person would have trouble. In this neighborly context, social pressure, potential as well as actual, serves as a counterbalance for both artisan and client. However, this is not the case in the tourist sector. In this section, I reveal a structure, informal yet clear, that incorporates several of the functions of the guild as I have outlined them here.

The predominant aspect of henna artisans' work in the tourist areas of S-Suuq l-Qdiim is its typical informal organization into small cooperative groups. Groups have a stable membership of women who pool their earnings on a daily basis. Although membership is stable, group members don't necessarily work identical hours. Earnings are divided each time a member is considered to have left or entered the work site. The relative independence of artisans is thus maintained, while the group exerts pressure (and extends support) through its consensus regarding legitimate and illegitimate absences — that is, absences that entail a division of the pool so as to exclude the absent member.

The pool is managed by a single group member. Members of cooperative groups give what they earn from customers to one member who acts as cashier, and divides it equally at the end of the evening, or when a member joins or leaves the group at any point during the day. For instance, two women who worked together during the morning would divide their receipts equally when the third regular member joined them

later in the day, beginning a new tally. Some short absences, such as to pray or visit the hammam, are considered necessary and unavoidable, and are not occasion to begin a new tally. Through pooling their income and dividing it equally among group members, artisans said, they always earned something each day, instead of doing very well on some days and very poorly on others. This structure also reduces the number of artisans with whom each competes for customers, while increasing the number of strong allies who can be depended upon for help in the frequent arguments with competitors.

Functions of cooperative groups

Membership in a cooperative group also allows women to collectively "defend" a space from outsiders, and assert collective ownership of the space at times when conditions (i.e. demand for henna services) do not support a larger number of artisans. By cooperating with several others, women also manage to successfully defend their rights to a particular space while allowing them the flexibility of occasional or regular absences in order to care for children, carry out housework, attend a wedding, visit a sick friend, or enjoy some leisure time.

When newcomers move into an area, group members defending space from an encroaching group increase the space between their stools, so as to take up more room than usual. If members of another group try to settle in these spaces, they are told they are too close, and to sit a bit further away. By spacing stools four or five feet apart along the edge of the flow of foot traffic, cooperative groups push newcomers away from desired areas.

Because of the necessity to occupy a space (thus maintaining the group's claim to an area) even when there is little likelihood of getting a customer and earning income, group members use their participation in strategies to defend group space to bargain for

other benefits when necessary. Layla, for instance, worked alone one afternoon in the blazing sun without a single customer. She later reminded other group members that she had done them a favor by staying out in order to keep other artisans from moving into their space. Although established groups may have respected custom and recognized use patterns of that area, newcomers were looking for places to work and could have argued that Layla's group had abandoned the area.

There are other advantages to working in cooperative groups. Women enjoy being in groups and talking among themselves. Being alone, even to work, is described as discomforting and likely to bring on bad health. Thus, women who are the sole female members of their household seek the company of friends, neighbors, young family members, or household employees; similarly, visiting is considered a good deed performed by the visitor to the benefit of the one visited. [13] Work life is no different, and women seek company to pass the time, either talking, or just sitting together. In addition to the desire for amusement and company is the advantage of having a witness to one's behavior. Since women's reputations are constantly put into question, the presence of a reliable witness to one's actions can be used when necessary. One artisan often called attention to this, saying that different people could testify to what she did all day, and to how "reserved" she was in her relations with others.[14]

Other benefits of being in collective groups are linked to specific traits of henna work. Women share some supplies, such as albums and the extra stools that are needed for customers that arrive in groups. Expensive to compile, albums are used primarily to display designs before a sale is made. Since the artisans rarely work with a picture in front of them while applying the design itself, three or four artisans often share an album or two. Other supplies, such as henna and paint thinner, are purchased in larger

quantities than are used up quickly by one worker. Dried powdered henna, purchased in sealed boxes of 250 grams, loses its potency if it absorbs humidity. Henna paste also loses its potency after a day or so. Women often share these purchases, each one chipping in a few dirhams to pay for the paint thinner or henna bought by one member and shared by the group.

Cooperative groups sitting together provide opportunities for learning. The most apparent form of learning is the mastery of the henna techniques described in Chapter 3. Through asking and observing, artisans learn to prepare needles and syringes, mix henna with the proper ingredients, knead it to a smooth paste of the right consistency, and to hold the syringe steadily and draw recognized designs against the skin with threads of paste. Yet other aspects of tourist sector henna work are equally important, and learned in conscious ways. Group members listen to each other interact with potential customers, and ask how to say set phrases in French or Spanish.

Despite the considerable advantages of working in cooperative groups, there are disadvantages. Disagreements with other artisans, including group members, sometimes escalate into arguments that could become violent. These notes recount how Khaddouj and Layla argued one day, as they often did.

> When the women counted up the other night Khaddouj was sitting alone. Mbarka said to come over, she said no. After a while I asked her what she was thinking about, it was clear that she was in a bad mood. She said "la ilaha illa la" [There is no god but God, the Muslim profession of faith, and in this instance, a meditative prayer.] "Good," I said. She still seemed perturbed. After a while it came out. Layla said that they should give Khaddouj less because she takes time to go to pray — the prayer at 1, at 4, at 7, and at 10. All the daily prayers except for the morning one. Khaddouj didn't comment on that. Layla said "why did you say 'the hammam'"? Layla said that Khaddouj had said that Layla shouldn't get money for a customer who came while she was at the hammam. Khaddouj began to tell her part, then, and said that Layla didn't go directly to the hammam, but went home and got her things and then

> went to the hammam and went home again. Layla argued back, and said that she worked hard, and that Khaddouj sat in the shade in the afternoon but she (Layla) sat in the sun. So each argued without contradicting what the other said. Layla kept repeating, "then why did you say those words, 'she went to the hammam.'" Obviously Khaddouj had implied earlier that Layla should get less because she took time off. The women divide the money according to who was there when a customer came, but some absences are clearly considered legitimate and others not. Khaddouj and Layla were arguing over what was considered legitimate.

The conflict was resolved when each agreed that the other was not abusing the group's plan to share the income equally among Layla, Khaddouj, and the two other group members who had not been absent at all. Another day, the conflict between Layla and Khaddouj was not successfully managed, and escalated into a fistfight. Onlookers called the police, and Khaddouj was taken to the station. When she returned to the square several days later, she said that she had gone to Casablanca to visit her daughter. She worked with another group after that.

Formation of cooperative groups

Cooperative groups are formed in several ways. Some of them are composed of women from the same family. In one case, a woman, her daughter, and pre-adolescent granddaughter worked together. Another daughter was part of a different group, however. This highlights an important aspect of group structure: group members share similar work habits and schedules. The daughter who was part of a different group worked much longer hours, and so joined one of the full-time groups.

Groups also tend to be composed of women of similar marital status. Married, divorced, and widowed women usually work together, while never-married women have their own groups. This characteristic reflects the social component of women's cooperative work groups. Possible conversation topics are mediated by the status of others present — married, divorced and widowed women do not discuss sexuality in

front of never-married women of any age (*l-banaat*, "girls"), and vice versa. Never-married women enjoy discussing potential husbands and sexual norms, topics on which they are expected to profess disinterest or ignorance in the presence of married women.[15]

As I was trying to learn about how groups were formed, I asked about relationships between group members. Often, the relationship was described as a friendship between women from the same neighborhood. This has the convenient advantage of allowing women to walk together home from the square late at night. In the course of my relationships with other families who were not part of the tourist trade and whose female kin had much more conventional lifestyles, I was often warned that it was dangerous for a woman to walk alone after evening prayers (indicated by the muezzin's call around 8:30 at night). Nonetheless, many of the henna artisans work far later into the night.

When I asked about one artisan, Sabira, Khaddouj shook her head. "She just came one day," she said, "and said that she needed to learn to do henna. She was divorced from her husband." Sabira was a stranger, but established her membership with the group through her skill for pleasant conversation. Her kindness and goodwill were evident, and Khaddouj said she was *meskina*, a good person in a poor situation. She sat with the women every afternoon and evening for several months, learning how to do henna, some French phrases, and what the tourist sector prices were. Finally, she began to work herself, and shared the daily tally. One day she wasn't there, and when I asked, Khaddouj said that Sabira's husband had taken her back and now Sabira did henna for her neighbors.

Money management within cooperative groups

The financial management structure of cooperative groups serves the needs of women who are not accustomed to dealing with larger sums of money than are needed to purchase the day's vegetables, flour, and yeast.[16] The disparity between actual units of Moroccan currency and the way people count money, quote prices, and make change make money handling much more complex than simple numeracy.

The basic unit of currency in Morocco is the dirham, which is broken down into 100 centimes. Prices are always rounded up to the nearest dirham for tourists, and larger items for local consumption are usually priced in round figures as well. By contrast, food items and inexpensive goods that are purchased on a daily basis are almost always priced in a combination of dirhams and centimes. However, a common currency system avoids the use of these fractions.

As a result of the various colonial histories of different areas of Morocco, there are several ways of speaking about currency. Centimes are sometimes called francs, and so a price of 1 dirham and thirty centimes is sometimes said to be a hundred and thirty francs instead. However, in S-Suuq l-Qdiim, most people think of currency in terms of riyals. Each riyal is equivalent to 5 centimes. A five-centime piece, the smallest unit of currency, is one riyal, so that a dirham is twenty riyals, and a five dirham coin is a hundred riyals.[17] Women with little or no formal education rarely learn to convert between the two systems, or add and subtract in dirhams and centimes, although they are fully capable of calculating sums and change due in riyals.

Because riyals were not part of the formal currency regime, and values indicated on bills and coins are in dirhams and centimes, tourists expect prices to be quoted in dirhams, with the result that henna artisans working in cooperative groups need to be

able to bargain in these terms. Each group has one member who can skillfully bargain and can discuss prices with tourists in dirhams.

Cash handling

Money is managed collectively. After completing a henna design and receiving money from the customer, each artisan gives the entire amount to the group cashier, and obtains change from her if necessary. Artisans account for each person for whom they apply henna, and groups sometimes argue over individual decisions to lower the price or to do henna for free for a friend or a child.

Money is divided at the end of an evening, after paying back amounts paid out by one member for group purchases. In one group, the treasurer goes around the group, first giving each the same kind of bill, going from the most to the least valuable. If a bill is left over, it is put aside, and the next kind of bill is divided evenly among the group members. The same process is carried out with coins. After these have been divided equally, the remaining bills are changed by one of the group members or taken to another person who changes it. The process is repeated until all the money had been divided.

Working alone

Despite the considerable advantages of working in cooperative groups, there are also disadvantages. Although working with other women provides companionship, it also provides occasions for disagreements and gossip. Lamya, who said that she preferred to work alone, said that she didn't want to be involved in other women's arguments.

What emerges is that women who are socially marginal are less likely to work successfully in groups. The most marginal artisans in my sample, Sana, Hannan, and

Ilham, all worked alone. Hiba, who made scandal as a teenager by running away with a foreigner, worked not with women of her own age, but with a group of young unmarried women. Twenty-five years later, she held some status as an older woman within this group, despite her continued lack of social standing among women her own age.

Sana was in her mid 40s, and worked alone. That was striking, since she had no knowledge of henna techniques and readily admitted it both to me and to the tourists she hastily scribbled her designs on. Dressed all in black, and displaying intricate hennaed designs on her hands and feet, she easily struck up friendships with young men who were charmed by her candor and beauty. After convincing a potential customer to buy henna, she would then search for one of the teenagers to apply it. Only if she could find no one (and after unsuccessfully begging me to do it) would she attempt to do it herself. Sana was shunned by almost every other woman who worked at the square, because of her addictions to alcohol and hashish. Much of the money she earned went to purchasing these, which she consumed with the young men who bought it on her behalf.[18] She also talked about her foreign boyfriend, who had given her a cell phone so they could keep in touch while he was out of the country. She was divorced, and lived in her family's big home with a teenaged daughter who did not come to the plaza.

The value that women place on trying to form groups was emphasized for me when Hannan, who had told me several times that she didn't work with other women because of the squabbling, asked Sana what time she was coming to the square the next day. "Let's work together, okay?," she suggested. Both flaunted their disregard for local standards by drinking alcohol and smoking hashish openly, and by failing to hide their liaisons with local and foreign men. Hannan was unmarried, and had two children who lived with her mother. In the evenings, she sometimes left early with men who invited

me to come along too. (She sharply refused on my behalf.) Although her family owned a pleasant house, she lived in a small room where she warned me that she sometimes smoked hash when her boyfriend visited. This common ground with Sana, and their friendship with me, became the basis for their agreement to work together.

During the time I spent in S-Suuq l-Qdim, Ilham consistently worked alone. Her status was truly incomparable. I met Ilham when I first moved to the city, but we didn't develop an ongoing relationship. She was very marginal, even among the artisans, who were themselves marginal.

One day, Ilham came up to me and said that she knew who I was. I thought this was odd, because everyone had known who I was for over a year. I reminded her that I was studying Moroccan henna traditions, and that God willing I would write a book about that and get my doctorate from my university in Canada. Ilham said, "No, my boyfriend told me you are a journalist." "I'm not," I said, "but my friend Barbara, the photographer, is." "Well, it doesn't matter," Ilham said, "you should know about my story." And she told it to me over the next few days. Ilham said that she didn't have parents, and she was raised by her grandmother. Before the grandmother died, she told Ilham that she had put a curse on her so that she would always be a virgin. "Everyone knows about that," Ilham said. "Ask anyone, they all know that I can't be penetrated. I can't have children because of the curse." She lived on and off with different friends and a boyfriend, and supported herself by doing henna for tourists. Lamya confirmed what she said, that Ilham's grandmother had put a curse on her and she would never be able to be penetrated.

Ilham wanted me to write about her story, and although I was concerned that this would diminish her dignity, it eventually seemed appropriate to respect her request.

It was the only thing she asked from me. An orphan as well as a non-woman (she could never be penetrated, which would make her *mraa*, "woman" instead of *bint*, "girl"), her social and biological (or psychological) difference from other women made her marginal within her neighborhood. The freedom that came with marginality pushed/allowed her to come to the plaza to support herself. Her narrative is situated at the end of a spectrum of marginality.

Other cooperative arrangements

Most of the artisans establish, individually rather than in groups, another kind of informal relationship in the form of a friendly agreement with one or two (male) orange juice vendors. The juice vendors have stationary carts with a small amount of storage space underneath, which some of the artisans take advantage of to store their stools and henna kits overnight or during breaks. These friendships are useful for the women, who try to hide their equipment when they anticipate police raids. Because of the police involvement, however, as well as the necessary shuffling through the small cart, the juice sellers sometimes aim to limit their involvement in the artisan's business.

The orange juice carts offer another benefit — a fixed address that could be located by any newcomer. The carts are easy to find, arranged around the perimeter of the square, and they display a decorative card bearing the owner's one or two digit business permit (*patente*) number. These signs are brightly painted, and the two-digit number easily is memorized by both artisans and customers.

Another reason the orange juice sellers tend to limit their duties to the artisans is the frequency of mix-ups and missed appointments. The artisans give the cart number as a meeting place to potential customers and new acquaintances, and when one person or the other fails to show, the juice seller becomes involved in the conflict. On some

occasions, when the appointment involved a customer who wanted to have henna applied, I observed artisans who, perceiving the situation, attempted to impersonate the one who had given the appointment. Several times, the one who had made the appointment showed up and found someone else with her client, and a loud and sometimes violent argument ensured. These occurrences were frequent, and several times ended with the juice seller telling the artisan to stop giving out his number.

Women try to maintain these relationships through friendly conversation as well as the daily exchange of food, treats, and small favors when possible. Nonetheless, these reciprocal relationships are less stable than those shared among cooperative group members.

Control

A primary feature of the organization of artisans' work is the presence and intervention of the state, which was represented by several different policing branches. The relationship between the state and the artisans is moderated by the ambiguous status of the artisans. Many kinds of street work, including shoe shining, portering, as well as trades specific to the plaza, such as snake and monkey handling, are regulated by the city.[19] These trades are all exercised by men. Henna work, on the other hand, is normally practiced at home, not in the street, and street licenses are not issued to artisans. In fact, several policemen told me that these women were not henna artisans at all, and cited the fact that these women did not provide henna services in the local home-based sector as proof. One continued, saying that it would be better if the artisans wore lab coats and worked in a distinct part of the square, together on a platform. This comment was repeated, in nearly identical terms, by two other men on separate occasions. (One was a government official, and the other a tourist sector merchant.) These comments reflect a

dominant ideology that holds that women should be regulated somehow, in terms of dress as well as mobility.

Thus the tourist sector artisans operate in a gray area, subject to periodic sweeps by the police who have been mandated to reduce crime and harassment directed at tourists. During the period of my fieldwork, raids were periodic, and coincided with the height of the tourist season as authorities attempted to reduce congestion in the square. A raid begins with a demonstration of aggression by one or two guards, who reach for the stools or photo albums of one of the women. Other artisans circle, usually with one of the women trying to negotiate with the officer. When it is clear that the sweep is a serious one, artisans take their equipment and run for the fringes of the market.

Cooperative groups provide members with greater resources in dealing with the police. One member often deals with the police on behalf of others, paying for them and intervening as necessary. I noted:

> I was sitting with Mbarka's group when Mbarka got up and ran after a policeman who had been harassing one of the members of her group. The girl came by and spoke quickly, throwing her henna gear into Mbarka's lap. Mbarka asked the other women [in her group], What is his name? And ran after [the girl and the policeman] as they left the square. Is that man a policeman, I asked. Yes, they said, he is going to cause her trouble.

Artisans who worked alone were not able to call on this resource.

Women maintain relationships with the officers who patrol the square or can be called upon when necessary to intervene, as in this excerpt from my notes:

> A man came over and said something very quietly to Sana. She said "Na'am" (yes, but in a very respectful way) and waited a few seconds, then she said to me, "Nodi" (get up). I said, That is a policeman in plain clothes? Yes, she said. We walked east, in the direction opposite to the policeman. She said, "He is very nice. He told me to go for a walk and come back tomorrow." On our way into the *qissaria* (covered shopping area) we passed another man. Sana went over and spoke to him for a few

> seconds, then came back. She said that he is the *chef* (police chief). She saw him earlier and talked to him, she said, and he said that if he saw the man who took her things [when he went to pray] he would tell him to give them back. She said that she told him just now that she had got the things.

Artisans' relationships with police and other representative of the state are most regularly established through bribes. Each woman who worked in the square had a guard whom she paid off daily. "Kul wahid andu wahid," [Everyone has one] Sana explained to me after several months, when I first saw and understood what was happening after a guard came to demand his daily bribe.

The usual amount was 5 or 10 dirhams daily paid by each artisan, depending on the status of the officer with whom they had the agreement. The guards approached newcomers and asked them for payment, as they did me after it became clear that I was sitting regularly with the henna artisans. On one occasion, I had to negotiate my own presence in the area and wondered whether or not I would be forced to pay as well.

Although my work had been approved at several levels by the local government representative, the head of municipal planning, and the local head of the Brigade Touristique, I had no formal or informal contact with the guards except when I was sitting with the artisans at the square. Everyone — from local police to shopkeepers and artisans — insisted that the 'assass had no right to talk to me as a foreigner. I described my first experience with them in my fieldnotes:

> I was standing talking to Hamid at the oj stand when one of the guards came up. He stood next to us for a while, then said, what are you doing here. Khaddouj and the others had already explained to him a dozen times that I am a student and I am learning Arabic here. He said, you are a nqqaasha, and picked up the stool that I had placed on the ground. I reached for it. No, I'm not I said. He held up the stool as if that were the proof. Ten dirhams, he said. No, I am not going to give you any money, I said. I don't do henna for money, I'm a student, I came here from Canada to learn Arabic. I am just learning about henna, what the women do to make money and support their families. He said, my son wants to

> go to Canada. I took the stool from him and went back to my conversation with Hamid.

Bribes are paid in many situations, either to persuade someone to overlook the infraction of a law or rule, to influence a decision, or to speed up the process of getting a paper. Fifty dirhams was a common amount suggested by my friends, although a well-to-do professional paid 200 dirhams to avoid being charged with a traffic violation. Ten thousand dirhams was said by one informant to be the price, for a licensed teacher, of an assignment in the city rather than in a rural village. Tasneem's narrative, featured at the beginning of this chapter, highlights the role of bribes in obtaining formal sector employment.

The minimum wage for a civil servant such as a policeman was 3200 dh a month, hardly enough to support a middle class lifestyle without the income from these sources. This salary would support a poor standard of living, but not a comfortable one with the consumption patterns desired by the new urban lower-middle class. For example, couples seeking a new lease on a two-room apartment with kitchen and bathroom in the central medina neighborhood where I lived would pay 1200 dirhams in rent, plus a key deposit of at least 5000 dirhams. Several middle (merchant)-class people I spoke with argued that bribes were an understood component of police and soldiers' salaries, and hence very few didn't participate in such schemes. Henna artisans, on the other hand, disagreed with this and said that the police had enough advantages, such as regular pay, access to housing loans, and health benefits.

Besides bribes, henna artisans gained the consideration of an officer in other ways. One policeman brought his wife to the square one evening and asked for an artisan to do henna for her because she was attending a wedding the next day. Khaddouj, after spending an hour doing an intricate design, complained to me that the officer was a

himaar (donkey, perj.). She said that she was doing his wife's hands and "stinky feet" for only 30 dirhams, which was a common price for local henna, but much less than tourist sector artisans generally charged.

Only a few women avoided paying these bribes entirely. Sana said that she didn't pay the police because she knew them from when she had been in jail, and brought them breakfast one day when she needed to recover items that had been taken during a raid. One artisan didn't pay bribes, but instead had an intimate relationship with a policeman, which assured that she would not be harassed by his peers. Others who didn't pay bribes could work only on the margins of the square, and when it was so busy that they could slip out of sight when necessary.

Several distinct government branches are involved in policing the area. The most significant of these is the Brigade Touristique, created to improve the city's image by reducing the number of unlicensed merchants and guides targeting tourists in the city center. The municipal police and members of the national guard (*l-'assass*) also patrol the areas where henna artisans work, and they too periodically disturb the women. The artisans consider the guards the least helpful and the least dangerous, although they are the ones most often patrolling the square and frequently harass the women. "The 'assass can't arrest you," Sana corrected me, after I had used the terms *boliisi* (police, Fr.) and *'assass* interchangeably in conversation one day. "They have to bring the police. And if the police shut you up in jail, the 'assass can't help you."

Officers and artisans cooperate in the maintenance of a system in which the guards agree to tolerate the women's presence, and the artisans agree to pay daily bribes. I witnessed three forms of interaction between the 'assass and the artisans. The first is the unofficial tolerance of the artisans' presence in exchange for a daily bribe. At this

level, actions to clear the artisans are half-hearted, non-violent, and motivated only by diffuse job requirements. Guards ignore the artisans, or tell them to leave but take no action. On some days, the general atmosphere is relaxed and humorous. Some of the officers occasionally make small talk, and ask about the artisans' children. I noted one afternoon:

> While I was sitting with Khaddouj a man approached from behind and tickled her on the back, kept walking with his friend, but looked back over his shoulder. Khaddouj reacted quickly without looking and hit me on the shoulder with the full force of her fist, then saw him walking off. They both laughed, and she apologized to me. It was a *spektor*, she explained, a non-uniformed policeman (inspecteur, Fr.).

The second form of action against the artisans occurs when pressure on the 'assass and tourist police increases as their superiors demanded that the square be cleared. On these occasions, they prohibit women from working, although they often allow them to return a short time later. These interactions are not violent, and are sometimes almost apologetic in tone, as the guards explain that the women had to leave. The women cooperate reluctantly, and sometimes refuse to pay on subsequent days since they had been unable to work. The artisans' refusal to pay bribes provokes the third kind of interaction, which is characteristically violent as the guards resent their lost income.

Besides ignoring the police as long as possible and fleeing to the perimeter when necessary, women employ other strategies against harassment by the guards and police. One of these is to alter their outfit, abandoning the nigab and workday jellaba that identifies them as henna artisans, and sit on the steps of a closed boutique where they might be mistaken for shoppers or visitors taking a rest.

Problems with the police produce several effects, most of them problematic for the artisans. Because their stools and photo albums are frequently taken and destroyed, artisans often argue over the shortage. Women are reluctant to invest too much, because

of the likelihood of losing the stools every few months. Borrowing stools from another artisan, and especially from another group, leads to arguments when the owner returns and can't find something to sit on, or lacks a stool for her own customers or friends.

When artisans were banned entirely from the square, they either retreat to the perimeter, or stop coming to the square all together. Those who moved from their habitual work areas to outlying areas work in spaces that are otherwise occupied by drunks and drug addicts. These areas receive no pedestrian traffic, and are used only to apply henna after finding customers in the central area and bringing them outside. These areas are poorly lit and dirty, and customers suspected they were dangerous. Moroccan customers who had already agreed on a price and were looking for a particular artisan had difficulty finding them during these periods. Furthermore, the presence of artisans in these areas that are otherwise used only by hashish smokers and alcohol drinkers contributes to negative perceptions of the artisans, regardless of their lack of participation in these activities.

Another effect of police harassment is women's attitude toward inflating prices. They argue that they have to charge more than traditional sector artisans because they have to pay bribes, and because there are many days when they can't work because of problems with the police. The inflation of prices in the tourist sector is experienced as problematic most acutely by tourists.

Guides and henna shops

The involvement of the police and orange juice merchants in the lives of the henna artisans are not the only instances in which their working lives incorporate masculine/patriarchal control and aid. Several times per hour in the afternoon, large groups of international tourists follow their guides, almost exclusively male, through the

square. As the group passes the henna artisans, some of the tourists slow down or stop to look. This is discouraged by the guides. Several times, I heard guides remind the group that they would stop later at a place where they could have henna done in a nice atmosphere, by better henna artisans. Another guide, speaking French to his group, said, "Look how they are! Real Moroccan women are not like that, sitting outside. They are prostitutes, practically." His group stared, but walked quickly by. The trope of "Real Moroccan women" was invoked by many who wished to express their displeasure with women's public behavior.

While the male tour guides' control over the purchasing power of their clients represents an obstacle for henna artisans in the public squares, it directs business to other henna artisans. Many of the guides brought their groups to medicinal herb shops that have been set up especially to accommodate large tour groups. Nassima worked in one of these shops, and explained to me one day that the shop is owned by a former guide. The other guides assure a steady stream of customers, and they receive a cut from the sales.

> While sitting in the street outside Hussein's shop, I noticed a tour group where each person had henna on hand or wrist or arm. Herborists can thus become a site on the itinerary, as tour guide "creates" the experience by saying "and now we will visit the henna," as I heard outside Nassima's shop, where the six girls wait to do henna for tourists.

These henna artisans work as independent contractors, earning cash directly from henna customers, and giving a portion of their sales to the owner. Nassima said that the working conditions were better than working outside at the square, since at the store they sat inside or on the doorstep. The shop itself is located in a side street, well out of the general flow of traffic, so the artisans do not come into contact with their neighbors and acquaintances as often as the women working outside do. Working

outside where contact with the public is constant and unregulated is a source of embarrassment for some of artisans. Nassima told me that she had been working outside, on the plaza, when her present boss came to her and said that it would be better for her to work inside. While Nassima said that working inside was more pleasant, she lost some of her income as a result. In S-Suuq l-Qdiim, these shops are all owned by men, who draw profit from the general belief that it is inappropriate and uncomfortable for women to work outside.

Working on commission in a herb shop provides a more acceptable environment, but decreases women's income. In another town near S-Suuq l-Qdiim, a small number of women — all with considerable family resources — have opened their own henna shops where they do henna inside and keep the proceeds themselves. In each case, women are working out of shops that belong to their natal or affinal families. The shops had been run by male family members, but when the henna market emerged as a new high profit sector, these women say that they asked for and received shop space. Two of five artisans have converted the shop entirely to henna use, while three have acquired space for henna in a shop that continues to sell other tourist-oriented goods. These artisans have professionalized. They have business cards, and shops with unique signs. Some dress in new Western-model clothes. Several have cell phones. Several engage in a division of labor, where they divide customer scouting and henna application among several workers. In these cases, they describe their division of labor as an aspect of their professionalization: these women don't "do" henna work, instead they organize it.

Nadia, who has a university degree and works out of her father's shop, sees herself as a businesswoman and an artist. She fights stereotypes of henna artists as

marginal women, who are divorced, badly married, or poor. When I shared with her that I thought that henna provided a resource for women who had few others, she rejected that idea. "No, it is an art," she said. She conceives of herself as a smart entrepreneur whose earnings buy luxuries for her family, and a new motor scooter for herself. Nadia's activities in her father's shop represent an alternate form of organization that attempts to meld the profitability of the tourist sector with the respectability of private work. She washes her hands with bleach in the evenings to get rid of henna stains, turning them rough and raw instead.

Their capacity to draw on family resources is not the only marker that distinguishes them from the S-Suuq l-Qdiim artisans. While all the twenty outdoor artisans for whom I had this data are illiterate, two of the five shop-keeper artisans in the secondary site have university diplomas. The low-status associations of henna work are not entirely eclipsed by their income-earning capacity, yet these larger-scale artisan-entrepreneurs are proud of their work, and of their status as businesswomen. These cases are atypical and few, but important because they indicate potential.

Male artisans

Also atypical but noteworthy are the two male henna artisans in this town. Both apply henna themselves occasionally, inside herb shops on which they have long-term leases. Abdelghani, who also engaged in informal guiding, said that the henna artisans were making so much profit that they were "manufacturing money." Having learned about henna from his mother, he said that he knew more than the young women who were doing it in the street outside his shop. Although both of the men had freshly used henna syringes in their shops on different occasions when I visited them, they seemed to

attract far fewer customers than the female artisans. Police and herbalists who employ women were more successful at diverting profits from female artisans.

Approaching tourists

Earlier in this chapter, I described how henna artisans approach potential customers by asking if they wanted a henna design or "tattoo." While artisans are not members of the social, symbolic, and aesthetic system for which they produce a commodity (Graburn, 1999:347), they acquire knowledge about it, and use this to increase their effectiveness in selling their product. Their familiarity with the high prices paid for henna in Europe and North America enhances their desire and determination to sell their services, at a comparable rate, to tourist clients.

In Moroccan cities, outdoor vendors of many sorts, including fish, bleach, mint, coal, and vegetables, make their presence and wares known to the public through the use of a formalized pitch, which may be a rhyming verse or a few words that they call out repeatedly. This use of a formalized, focused pitch is uncommon among tourist-sector entrepreneurs in S-Suuq l-Qdiim. Rather, in the street as well as in the souqs, men seeking to conduct business with foreigners commonly use a greeting or a question as an opening gambit, asking "Is everything fine?" (in English) or "Qu'est-ce que vous cherchez?" (in French). Men working in the formal and informal tourist sectors listen to conversations between strolling foreigners and observe foreigners' styles of dress and behavior, and then employ shared theories of identifying ethnic origin when approaching them.

While the henna artisans also develop and employ theories of tourist ethnicity and behavior, they rarely attempt to befriend tourists (even superficially) in the way men

did, nor do they usually make advances that appear purely social. Instead, they use a formalized pitch, often simply calling out "Henné!" or "Tatouage!" This pitch is always accompanied by the demonstration of intent: a henna book is held out as advertisement, or the syringe is raised over the artisan's own left hand, as if to begin a design.

The contrast between the techniques of male and female vendors (here, the henna artisans) is parallel to beliefs about proper female behavior. A woman of high moral fiber should demonstrate proper behavior — she should *kathshim.* This behavior should be demure and somewhat shy (Davis, 2002:30). The trilateral root of *hshim* (the uninflected form of the verb) is shared by *hashuuma*, shame. The etymological link between these two words is clarified in classical Arabic. Classical Arabic verbs formed from the same root include the synonyms *tahashshama* and *ihtashama*, which have the dual meanings of "to be ashamed to face" someone and "to be reticent, modest, shy, bashful, diffident" (Wehr, 1976:179). Behavior that isn't reticent or bashful is circumspect. The artisans aren't reticent, certainly, but their strategies demonstrate a concern for what might be considered *hashuuma.*

Artisans' theories of tourist consumption

Artisans evaluate customers on the basis of apparent ethnicity, apparent consumption habits, and group behavior. As male tourist sector workers do, they evaluate the ethnic identity of passers-by and greeted them with a few phrases of an appropriate language. Ilham, for instance, hadn't had an opportunity to learn Greek, and wondered out loud in the incident noted at the beginning of this chapter whether Greeks were more likely to speak English or Arabic. Identifying potential customers by ethnicity is considered important, and demonstrating this knowledge with phrases of a foreign language is a desired goal.

Moroccan men working in the markets that are the tourist circuit often call out to tourists in ways that don't seem to be sales pitches at all. Hearing two people speak English between themselves, and assuming they are British, some shop workers would call out "Fish and chips! Fish and chips!" Talking about this behavior one day with some of the artisans, I said that I didn't think that English people liked having someone yell "Fish and chips! Fish and chips!" as they walked by: Halima responded that people did it to show that they knew where they came from. This is a way that Moroccans in the tourist industry asserted agency across linguistic barriers, communicating to tourists/viewers that they are neither landscape nor cultural artifact.

Armed with their knowledge (or guess) of a tourist's ethnicity, artisans suggest designs that they believe are popular with that ethnic group, such as bracelets and armbands for European and North American men, sparse flowery designs for European women, abstract geometric designs for North Americans, and popular one-finger hand designs to female domestic or MRE tourists. Japanese tourists (or rather tourists that were thought to be Japanese) are largely disregarded as potential customers. Khaddouj said one day as a group of Japanese tourists walked by, "They don't do henna. They think Moroccans are dirty and don't want us to touch them. Do you see them go by your house wearing those masks?" Spanish and French women, on the other hand, are thought to be very good customers, and generate more attention.

Artisans also evaluate apparent consumption habits. People carrying shopping bags or dressed in local or tourist trade items (Berber straw hats, rayon caftans, babboushes) are always approached, while foreigners in worn-out or dirty clothes are often ignored unless they display interest. Khaddouj commented on different occasions, as she watched tourists respond with interest without actually buying henna, that not all

tourists are rich, and that they spend money while on vacation but didn't spend during the rest of the year in order to afford to travel. Her observations of tourist (and anthropologist) behavior were integrated into a rich and continuously evolving understanding of cross-cultural consumption patterns.

A final characteristic that artisans evaluate is group behavior. Artisans see that small groups walking together tend to consume together. So when an initial member in a group responded with interest, additional artisans would run up and focus their attention on other group members who, they anticipate, have an increased likelihood of purchasing. Artisans also press their books into the hands of any onlookers who stop to observe them while applying henna.

Sales technique

In order to interest a potential customer, some offer to do a simple design for free, or for five dirhams. Milouda, one of the teenaged girls who used this technique, would reach for a female tourist's hand or forearm and, repeating again that it was free, poise her syringe and ask again if the woman would like a flower or a scorpion. When she completed the design a few minutes later, she would state her prices for more complex designs such as bracelets and armbands for men and women, or complete or partial hand designs for women. At this point, she took out her photos and asked which design most pleased the customer, negotiating this time for a paying job.

The younger artisans sometimes offered designs "cadeau" (as a gift), and then asked for something in return. A Norwegian tourist told me how she ended up giving her hair clips to a henna artisan:

> The artisan — one of the young girls — grabbed Kathleen's fingers and held them tightly. Kathleen was afraid that she might be allergic, and told the artisans that they didn't have money with them, that they were just

> walking around in the souq, and had bought their things earlier. Henna girl did a flower "for free" for her friend, then insisted on money. Kathleen didn't have any. So the girl pointed at Kathleen's watch, probably worth 150 dollars. Kathleen said she waved her hand emphatically and said NO. She said the girl seemed to understand that. Then the girl pointed at Kathleen's earrings. "I was going to give her one, but I couldn't get it out." Then pointed at hair clips. Kathleen gave her 2 or 3 (she still had 2 left). She seems shaken by this. I remember that Fatiha had said to me, "Some girls say it is for free, but remember nothing is free in S-Suuq l-Qdiim."

In this anecdote, the artisan held onto the fingers of the potential customer while making her pitch. A claim to a customer is made before a sales agreement, however, usually with the first acknowledgment of an artisan's offer. One evening, a sharp disagreement broke out between two of the young henna girls. Ilham called out to another girl (who worked from another spot in the square) that a customer was "hers." "No," the other girl said, "I asked her and she said yes." "She is mine," Ilham replied, "I spoke to her before and so she is mine." The other girl ignored Ilham's rebuke, and walked off to her stool with the customer as Ilham told all in hearing distance that this girl was mean and nasty.

Setting prices

One strategy artisans use to set prices for henna work is to assess the customer's previous buying experiences and knowledge of local prices, since knowledge of local prices for similar goods is the most effective bargaining tool a buyer can employ. Looking at a customer's henna design (or any locally purchased item), the artisan would ask where it was obtained, and for how much. If a customer gave a price that was within the tourist market range, the artisan continued the sales pitch, confident of a likely sale. Table 4.1 compares prices in the tourist sector with prices paid by Moroccans for henna applied at home. Moroccan tourists paid prices at the low end of the scales given for tourist sector. Some other figures will allow these prices to be situated in the budget of a

female household head: laundresses and hammam workers earn about 300 to 500 dirhams a month, shop clerks or as maids earn between 500 and 700 dirhams, while teachers earn between 3200 and 3600 dirhams monthly (plus benefits).

Table 4.1: Henna prices in tourist and local sectors, 2000-2001

Product description	*Tourist sector (dirhams)*	*Local sector (dirhams)*
Man's arm medallion, scorpion (*'agarba* or *'aqarba*).	20 dh	N/A*
Man's bracelet (*samiita* or *brassleh*), abstract geometric (*marrakshi*) style.	30 – 50 dh	N/A
Woman's bracelet or armband, abstract geometric or floral (*khaliji*) style.	20-50 dh	N/A
Woman's stomach motif, abstract geometric or floral style.	50 dh	N/A
Woman's shoulder motif, abstract geometric or floral style.	50 dh	N/A
One small hand motif (*wriida*), floral style.	Free, then artist asks for "equivalent gift"; 10-15 dh when price is fixed in advance	Less than 5 dh; free for children and poor neighbors
One medium hand motif (*yedd wahid khfif*), floral style.	15 dh – 50 dh	N/A
One full hand (*yedd wahid aamr*), floral style.	30 dh – 150 dh	N/A
Both full hands (*yeddin aamriin*), floral style.	30 dh – 200 dh	N/A
One-fingered hand design (*sbiia'*), floral style.	15 dh – 100 dh	5 dh
Two one-fingered hands (*juj sbiiaat*), floral style.	20 dh – 200 dh	N/A
Both feet (*rijliil*), partial design, floral or abstract geometric style.	30 - 100 dh	N/A
Both hands and both feet (*yeddin u rijliil*), floral style.	N/A	30 dh

Product description	*Tourist sector (dirhams)*	*Local sector (dirhams)*
Both hands and both feet, floral style, above ankles (*taali'*).	N/A	35 dh
Both hands and both feet, abstract geometric style.	N/A	40 dh

Moroccans frequently discuss how much one paid for clothing or any other item, and whether a price is a good one or not. In the local sector, prices are rarely displayed and are rarely fixed. Fixed price goods in the local sector include staple foods (whose prices are controlled by the state), pharmacy items, and school supplies. Nearly everything else can be bargained for.

Tourist sector prices are similarly structured. Despite guidebooks and travelers' social networks, individual tourists have less knowledge than workers in the the local service sector who specialize in providing experiences and products for them. Knowledge about prices and the desire not to be taken advantage of conflicts with most tourists' desire to have a friendly interaction or relationship with the service provider.

The notes made for me by an American woman who lived in S-Suuq l-Qdiim for several months provide a crisp description of how tourists may respond to these sales techniques. After telling me about her experience, she agreed to write it down in more detail. Kate wrote,

> I met Fatima within days of my arrival in Morocco — in the square. She looked to be about forty or fifty (although, I'm sure she is younger than that), small-build and very friendly. She has two teen-aged daughters who were always with her. She was never too pushy, but she always wanted me to let her henna my hands. I told her that I wanted to wait — but when I did do it, I promised to come to her. I put her off for a week or two. During this time, we had many friendly conversations as I passed

> through the square and finally, when she was greeting me one afternoon, I said yes to her offer.

These interactions with Fatima had significant emotional content for Kate, who eventually responded to the sales pitch out of a desire to give business to her new friend.

> Emma, my traveling companion and friend, was with me. Fatima, her two daughters, and Emma and I went down a sidestreet — off the square to sit on the sidewalk. Fatima began to henna the palm of my left hand. She was doing a bit of a crappy job. Meanwhile the sisters (daughters) were totally harassing Emma into having the henna done. She did not want it, but I said, "What's the big deal? Just let them." I remember thinking that I did like this woman, and even if her artistry wasn't excellent, she was nice and I didn't mind being a customer to her. Emma sort of gave in.

Emma told me separately that she had been reluctant to have henna done at the square because she had seen very poor quality work and didn't want to have to look at it constantly on her own hands. However, for Kate, the emotional content of the interaction was very high, and her concern to maintain a warm relationship with the artisan won out over her aesthetic values and her concern for Emma's independent decision not to participate. Kate finally collaborated with the artisans in convincing Emma to be hennaed as well.

> When they were finished, they asked us to stay until the henna dried and peeled off so they could put on a special solution that would turn the henna black and make it last longer. I didn't feel terribly enthusiastic about this because the design, as I have indicated, was not particularly beautiful and the black was supposedly going to last for a month. Anyway, the solution was a sort of clay mask that the daughters made out of a gray dust (dried clay) and water — inside smallish clear plastic bags. They put the plastic bags over our hands and really rubbed the clay into the parts of our hands that had been henna-ed. We waited with the plastic bags and the clay masks for five or six minutes.

The artisans described the cement-ammonia salts-water mixture as "dried clay," as they gloss over inorganic ingredients used in the process.

> At this point, I was getting a little bored with the whole thing in general, but I think I still felt relatively friendly and at ease about all of it. Maybe I was a little nervous that the clay mask was going to make it cost more

> and I wasn't thrilled with the idea of having this shakey-handed design on my hand for a month. But I was not uptight about money — or being swindled.

Again, the emotional content of the interaction predominated. Kate's reflections were very self-aware as she noted that she was not concerned about the price. From later conversations, it became clear, however, that her financial circumstances were very precarious.

> They took the plastic bags off of our hands and washed them — what remained was my pitiful henna design in black on my palm. Emma's design was a little more beautiful, but she didn't want it in the first place and I know she wasn't very happy.
>
> The five of us started to walk back out to the square together, but before crossing the street into the square, I stopped and asked how much. The three of them surrounded us and said "400 dh." Unfortunately, I cannot remember very well what happened after that. We showed them that all we had was 150 dh. (Which wasn't true. We tried offering less at first, but they were really being demanding and we definitely did not feel confident — they absolutely knew this, so we pulled out 150 finally and said it was all we had.) They eventually took the 150 and moved to let us walk by but they said that the next time they saw us they would expect presents from America.
>
> They had become quite rude at this point and we were getting angry because we felt trapped and foolish. They wanted us to bring some little trinkets or something (I don't know what, exactly) from the U.S. for the next time we ran into them. A few days passed. We avoided the square and Fatima as much as possible. The henna washed off in four or five days.
>
> One day, I was walking across the square when I heard Fatima calling to me. I ignored her. Her voice faded as I crossed the street, approaching the post office, but I found that her voice was replaced by that of a little girl who wanted my attention. I turned and the little girl said that Fatima needed to know whether or not I was her friend. I said no, I am not a friend of Fatima's. The little girl presumable delivered the message. I have never seen Fatima again.

Kate's interaction with Fatima was typical of many that I witnessed and heard of from tourists. Other interviews with women who had purchased henna at the square revealed similar themes. The customer's emotional involvement is always at issue. In the following excerpts, I try to draw out these themes again, and relate them to our different

ways of viewing the exchange. Notes from my first conversation with one of the young henna artists demonstrate how prices are negotiated, and how, in the context of colliding social worlds, interlocutors rely on different ways of calculating a fair price:

> I asked how much. She said, One million dollars. I said, Oh, I am not rich. She laughed — derisively? — and said, Neither are we. Then she waited for me to give a price. The key to bargaining is to avoid giving your price first — you want to be able to be the one to laugh at your interlocutor's unrealistic offer/demand. So I gave my price. Ten dirhams, I said. She looked shocked, so shocked that I could hardly tell if she was happy or not.

Farida's comment, "Neither are we" reveals how tourist sector prices were conceptualized not in terms of comparison between products or effort, but in terms of comparable wealth. My offer of ten dirhams was a very reasonable price, I estimated at that time, for a half-hour's work. Children working as workshop apprentices or maids earn this amount for a day's labor, although it is paid to the worker's guardian, not the worker. Nonetheless, she had good knowledge that, as poor as I perceived myself, I had enough money to buy leisure time and a plane ticket.

> She held her hand out to Said and shook his with an emotion that I could not decipher. She said, "Ha!" Afterwards I realized that she meant, "Ha! You are right. Tourists are not nice."
>
> She said, It is okay if you don't have the money, just go.

In this last statement directed at me, Farida shows that she was a skilled bargainer. Shopkeepers, in both the local market and in tourist shops, use derision to shame a consumer into offering a higher price. In this situation, the skilled buyer will say "Wakhkha!" (Okay then!) and leave, provoking the seller to run after and make a lower offer. Not having mastered this line of attack, I adopted another common technique:

> I said, No, I know what the price is. For 40 dirhams, you can have hands and feet. You did one hand, so I should give you 10. She said, No, but this is different. This is the plaza. Look at how detailed the work is, look, it is the best quality, it will last three weeks, look at all the designs there are.

> I said, but the lines aren't thin, I know what the price should be. A tour guide, he works half a day for 50 dirhams, and you worked half an hour. I will give you ten. You are making a good deal.

Again, we were speaking in different terms. I played the purchaser's role of belittling the merchandise, pointing out its flaws, and showing how I estimated its comparative value. Farida described the product very differently, and drew on her knowledge of the characteristics of good henna for leverage. She anticipated that I had no mental template of good artistry.

In Farida's justification of her asking price, there seems to be a key to understanding what this performance is about. "No, but this is different," she said, "This is the plaza." What did she mean by this? Why would someone knowingly pay more for work that looks so much more coarse and unskilled than *nqiish d-daar*, henna that's done at home? My initial misunderstanding is located in my assumption that the two markets are the same. In fact, they are not.

Risk and profit in henna work

Henna artisans working in the tourist sector invest, experience risk, and expect to earn a profit just as other merchants do. While local sector henna is purchased by the client who engages an artisan to mix and apply it, tourist henna is a retail product, purchased and mixed in advance by an artisan who seeks clients. In fact, there is a similar mark-up in all retail sectors, which many Moroccans circumvent by coordinating the production and taking any extant risk themselves through purchasing raw materials and engaging an artisan to perform the labor. This practice is most typical of the clothing market, where consumers purchase fabric which they take to a tailor. Wooden furniture, mattresses, and upholstered seating are also obtained in this way. In some towns, there are inexpensive restaurants that operate in the same manner: the customer brings all the

necessary ingredients (meat and vegetables, as well as oil, bread, spices, tea, and sugar) and provides instructions on how they are to be prepared. The cook receives as little as 5 dirhams for his labor.

I contend that criticism of women's efforts to earn profit appropriate to the risks outlined in this chapter is linked to both to the notion that women provide services for the body as part of their natural role, and to the ideology of the family wage. Women's work in the cash economy, despite (as I demonstrate in Chapter 1) high rates of divorce and low employment that have weakened the capacity of the extended family to provide for female members lacking a male cash earner, remains associated with the purchase of non-essential items. In one interview, a young man told me that women worked "to buy lipstick." Another said that women worked just to get out of the house. The "family wage" concept, which refers to the rate paid to men on the assumption that they are supporting non-productive family members (children, and a wife whose labor is, by contrast, reproductive), which renders women's earnings are supplementary and optional. The strong family ideology promoted by Arab and Muslim society gives strength to this notion, casting the intact family as the norm rather than a desired goal.

Conclusion

Henna artisans maintained social relationships that are long term and stable (cooperative groups), long term and ambivalent (orange juice sellers), long term and conflictual (police), and short-term and conflictual (customers). The cooperative groups in which most artisans participate are alliances that offer financial security, resource sharing, companionship, training, and protection. Members with greater skill or experience in dealing with police intervene on behalf of their group members, both

offering immediate help and showing them how to deal with outsiders. Outsiders include not only police, but also other henna artisans, rude bystanders, and difficult customers.

The police, like the cooperative groups, are one of the primary features of social organization of women's henna work in the tourist sector. Relationships with the police are complex, and reflect different arrangements reached between individual artisans and individual officers, as well as changing conditions within the square, and within the hierarchy of the police. The threat of police harassment runs parallel to the general social discomfort with the work of henna artisans at the plaza, and reflects a compromise between profiting through participation in the tourist economy and retaining "traditional" conservative social values. Under the guise of controlling hustlers who over-charge tourists, lower-level police use verbal and physical intimidation against all the artisans, taking the women's equipment and threatening to throw them out of the square. Yet the police take daily bribes from as many women as will pay, including the majority whose business practices are reasonable. The basis for the capacity of the police to exact bribes is in the larger social context, which does not validate the public, independent, outdoor work of henna artisans in the tourist sector. Artisans' interactions with tourists reflect the tenuousness of their work situation, but also their desire to profit much as other merchants do.

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[1] For a recent survey of women's economic roles in the Middle East generally, see Nashat and Tucker, 1999:101-109. See also the discussion of cash-saving labor among low-income women in newly-urbanized Cairo neighborhoods in Hoodfar, 1997.

[2] A few very old women did work as tarot card readers, although none of the tarot card readers approached foreigners. Comparison with henna artisans suggests that they could have acquired the necessary language skills if there had been sufficient market demand, nonetheless the linguistic competence required for card reading is much higher than the level attained by henna artisans.

[3] Other women and girls often spend the evenings socializing in the courtyard of the nearby mosque. This is a respectable practice according to my neighbors. Boys and men are free to visit other quarters of the city as they like. A grassy boulevard near the four star hotels outside the

medina is a popular late-night meeting place for unemployed or unmarried brothers and male friends of young women in this social group. Male household heads often work until ten at night, then visit a café to smoke and socialize with male friends, or return home for a light evening meal.

[4] This holiday commemorates Abraham/Ibrahim's obedience toward God in preparing to sacrifice his son. Moroccans of all social classes sacrifice a ram, and aim to purchase as large an animal as possible, and sometimes several, in order to show the family's religious and economic status. Amina, an artisan who is a divorced mother of three, spent 950 dirhams (three times her monthly rent) on her ram. A newspaper article about the increasing price of rams in March 2001 was illustrated with a picture of a man on a spit, being roasted over a fire as a ram stood on its hind legs smiling and turning the spit's handle. A joke demonstrates the anxiety people felt about this purchase: A merchant bought four sheep, saying there would be one for his family and three to give to the poor. His neighbor heard this, so on 'Iid l-Kbir he went out to his yard, and held a knife to his son's throat. The merchant saw him, and yelled over, Get your own sheep!

[5] Scott Simon, in his case study of middle class female entrepreneurs in Taiwan, contends that the argument that women enter business in order to make up for their husband's failure to provide adequately "fails the litmus test of feminism." (Simon, 2003:14) In fact, in stark contrast to the henna artisans whose experiences are described here, Simon found, contrary to the expectations of his acquaintances in the field, that a very large proportion (nearly 80 percent) of female entrepreneurs in his sample were married (ibid:19). In 28 percent of cases, husbands provided capital for the business. (ibid:22)

[6] Factories are a significant formal sector employer in this regard, accounting for nearly 30 percent of female employment in the Moroccan formal sector in the 1980s (Moghadam, 1993:39).

[7] This apprenticeship model is common throughout Morocco, and takes other forms as well. Merchants and artisans take on very young boys (as young as five years old) as unpaid trainees, while older boys receive a reduced wage. In the formal sector, young men and women with college or high school educations, for instance, compete to obtain unpaid work-training opportunities at companies in their area of specialization.

[8] This practice can lead to conflicts between daughter and family when she wishes to marry, since this move shifts her income to an independent economic unit she forms with her husband.

[9] Groups of tourists led by a licensed Moroccan guide tend to move counter-clockwise throughout the city on day-long or half-day organized visits. Commented tours begin with visits to the "monuments," or sanctioned tourist sites. During the afternoon hours when the monuments are closed (1-4 pm), tour groups visit the souqs, which the tour guides call the "slaughterhouse." Guides receive thirty percent commission on sales made by their clients. Tour guides told me that the commission system was necessary, since the glut of tour guides meant that they worked only once a month. Furthermore, they had none of the illness or unemployment benefits that they expected as licensed university-educated professionals with strong foreign language skills.

[10] In 2000 and 2001, the national government and a private foundation administered by the royal family mounted television and poster campaigns that advertised increased staff to deal with waiting time at the Spanish border, as well as temporary rest stops providing information, refreshments, and emergency medical care to people traveling by car. Banks and construction companies also aim publicity campaigns at returning Moroccans, offering convenient banking services and loans for vacation homes in new urban neighborhoods.

[11] This scheduled movement through locations/territories that are bounded and conceived in time as well as in space bears similarities to the "tribal road" of the Baseri nomads described by Barth (1965).

[12] For a full discussion of craft guilds in the Ottoman Empire, see Baer, 1970 as well as Hodgson, 1974 (vol.2):110-112. Hodgson notes that guilds were found in the entire Nile-Oxus

region, as well as in the Roman Empire. These guilds produced the market organization characteristic of Middle Eastern and North African commercial areas, as merchants and craftsmen were located near their peers, creating a cohesive commercial and spatial unit. Baer dates the formation of guilds in the Turkish part of the Empire to the fifteenth century. By the seventeenth century nearly the entire population was incorporated into these organizations, which included, along with associations for craftsmen, professional organizations of religious scholars, farmers, and factory workers, as well as the notorious "immoral guilds" of prostitutes and pickpockets (Baer, 1970:28-31).

[13] Kanafani, 1984; Hoodfar, 1997; and Meneley, 1996 report similar attitudes among women in UAE, Egypt, and Yemen respectively. Hoodfar noted that her neighbors' concern for her health required her to develop an alternate strategy for writing fieldnotes, since leaving the light on to work immediately brought visitors. Her solution was to make notes on a tape recorder in the dark. Similarly, my informants frequently asked if I was lonely or upset from spending time alone in my apartment. After I mentioned one day that several families offered to "lend" me a child to keep me company, Hind explained that it was common for newly-wed brides to ask for a child to stay with them so that they wouldn't be lonely during the period before they had their own.

[14] See Meneley, 1996, for a discussion of the role of social networks in a small town in Yemen. Through skill and judicious choices made in the course of regular hosting and visiting, these women established their social identity and status. The full-time henna artisans in the present study, generally deprived of regular opportunities to engage in neighborhood-based networks of this kind, instead employed their work-based contacts in much the same manner.

[15] Unmarried women in their twenties sometimes approached me with questions about sex (Do American women like it? Do American women go on top when they sleep with men? Is anal sex as common in America as it is in Morocco? Did I have sex with my husband before we married?), but only when they could speak to me alone. Their questions reveal much more knowledge about sex than society generally acknowledges. The sexual attitudes and experiences of young Moroccans are the subject of large-scale qualitative studies carried out by Moroccan sociologists Abdessamad Dialmy (2000) and Mounia Bennani-Chraibi (1994).

[16] In many households, durable goods and expensive grocery items such as fruit or meat are purchased as necessary by the male wage-earner.

[17] In marketplace conversations I observed, sellers often switch between dirhams, riyals, and francs in a single interaction without ever specifying the unit of currency. Interlocutors rely on a shared understanding of market values. During the early months of my fieldwork, I spent several afternoons in the rug souq observing bargaining interactions as well as how currency is represented by men in local market transactions, especially auctions. Auctioneers often shorten numbers when it is understood that they are multiples of a hundred. For instance, a price of seventy dirhams may be stated (or announced in an auction) as *'arbatash* or "fourteen," that is, fourteen hundred riyals. Both the shortened form and the use of cardinal numbers without currency units allow a bargaining technique in which the buyer can feign ignorance of the seller's message, saying, for instance, "300? 300 riyals! 300 dirhams? Oh, my misfortune! No! Dirhams?"

[18] Because of my need to maintain status (and my reputation) with several groups, I spent little time with her on days when I found her in the alley with the teenagers, smoking hash and drinking from recycled bottles filled with *ma hya*, a cheap domestic alcohol traditionally produced by and for the Jewish community. She apparently forgave me for quickly greeting her and continuing on my way, and often told me, in sober moments that it was bad to smoke hashish, and that I shouldn't start. According to another friend, a day-long hashish "trip" costs about thirty dirhams, while thirty dirhams of *kif* (a milder hallucinogen composed of dried marijuana leaves and stem, cut with tobacco) would last about four days.

[19] Salahdine (1988) provides a useful and detailed study of men's informal work, which he calls *petits métiers* or "small trades," in Fez.

5
Conclusion: Henna and the integration of liminal bodies

As I considered what henna meant in Morocco, particularly in the tourist centers where it emerged as a newly commoditized good in the mid-1990s, I came upon the comments of Deborah Kapchan in reference to henna application at South Asian weddings in New York. Kapchan describes henna, which is "written" on the body, as a text that contains and creates meaning. She writes,

> The ritual henna application is a process whereby Pakistani identity is reinvented as a corpus of designs on a feminine body, designs that become metonyms for the valuative and aesthetic transformations brought about by immigration. The henna artist covers the bride's hands and feet with swirls and arabesques drawn with the reddish paste, symbols which call for decipherment. But this body is written differently in Rego Park, Queens, than it is in Pakistan. Appropriating traditional forms and historical meanings, first-generation Pakistani-American women create new intertextual relations between embodied texts across time and ritual space. (Gorfain, Kapchan, and Young, 1996:82-83)

Kapchan states what I consider to be the core of meaning in this new form of a traditional practice. I have tried to extend the search for signification into the social, the relations between artisans and their neighbors, consumers, families, and friends.[1] In many ways, this research has responded to critiques of anthropological studies of tourism which point to an over-emphasis on negative social and economic effects of tourism, and a lack of attention to the ways in which local residents participate as actors in this system and interact with tourists.

My research is situated in the world of informal tourism workers and explores the structure of the tourist-oriented henna trade, revealing the strategies developed by women as they negotiate this terrain.[2] These strategies respond to the powerful cultural

motifs that intersect with the lived experience of the tourist sector henna artisan. Chapter 3 illustrated how tourist sector henna techniques have evolved in response to social and economic aspects of production in this novel setting. In Chapter 4, I showed how the role of tourist sector nqqaasha is constructed in local culture, and highlighted the multi-layered public discourse in which this role is embedded. In this chapter, I begin by introducing paradigms that capture the ethnographic data outlined in Chapter 2, and then integrate these notions into an overview of the fieldwork. I present data that highlight local views on cultural commoditization, as well as a competing paradigm for understanding the integration of henna ritual into the tourist market. Finally, I discuss the relevance of women's construction of legitimacy and authority in the local social context, and in the broader context of tourism and globalization.

Paradigms

Henna is a temporary vegetable due that is applied to the surface of the body with a finger, a stick, or a blunt-needled syringe to create decorative patterns or solid areas of color. The dye itself is made from the ground leaves of the henna bush, *Lawsonia inermis*. Leaves are ground to a fine powder and mixed with water, and in Morocco, often a little paint thinner. The bright green paste dries on the skin, turning the superficial layer of the skin a shade of orange, red, brown, or black, depending on the quality of the henna, the character of the skin to which it is applied, and the after-care techniques used. As the skin exfoliates, the henna stain fades and disappears over the course of several weeks.

Although henna may be applied at any time, its application at times of status change including marriage (particularly the first), immediately before childbirth, and the

end of mourning, indicates that it has powerful symbolic importance. Women linked henna practices to emotional and social well-being, important throughout women's lives, but particularly at these times of role-change.

Rites of passage

While the material and decorative characteristics of henna practices suggest that it has many qualities of art,[3] the ethnographic data presented in Chapter 2 describes how henna practices incorporate instrumentality as well. Henna is often described in the context of rituals, culturally-specific patterned symbolic actions that "do things, have effects on the world, and are work that is carried out" (Parkin, 1992:14). Rituals are instrumental.

Important rituals include birth rites, weddings, and funerals, each of which incorporates or has incorporated henna practices in the Moroccan context. The rites of passage are those rituals that mark – or rather, organize – movement in space, time, or status, relating to the crossing of territorial boundaries and thresholds, taboos and celebrations associated with agriculture, and ceremonies that accompany moments of physical and social change for individuals (Van Gennep, 1960).

The rite of passage involves movement through three phases: separation, liminality, and reintegration, each characterized by patterned actions. Life cycle rituals, in particular, distinctly demonstrate these three phases as the individual is ushered from one status to another. The first phase, separation, involves the tearing away of customary behavior, dress, routines, and places; it may be marked by shearing the hair or tearing the clothes, a physical separation that mirrors the social one (Turner, 1995 [1969]). The important work, transition, takes place during the liminal phase. In the third phase,

reintegration, the individual is returned to the community having acceded to his or her new status.

In Van Gennep's formulation, the model turns around the concept of liminality. In fact, Van Gennep underlines the importance of liminality to the rite of passage model (although rituals may emphasize one phase or another, depending on their distinct character, Van Gennep, 1960:11) by naming its elements preliminal rites, liminal rites, and postliminal rites (Van Gennep, 1960:11; see also Turner, 1995[1965]:166-167). While the term *liminal* has been widely adopted, it is interesting to note that preliminal and postliminal rites are more frequently known by the parenthetical explanations offered in this same discussion: rites of separation and rites of incorporation (Van Gennep, 1960:11). Victor Turner's further development of the concept of liminality has focused on the idea of *communitas*, the non-hierarchical communal feeling or bond that emerges during ritual (Turner 1995[1969]).

Liminality is a condition out of time and out of place, betwixt and between, and a period of trial, ordeal, and instruction. Deprived of social identity, the individual experiences the loss of taboos belonging to the former status, and the imposition in their place of a new set of taboos unique to the transitional phase. The ordeals of initiands can be interpreted as the symbolic obliteration of their previous status, allowing for society's creation of their new one (Turner 1995[1969]:103). Cross-culturally, liminality is often characterized by the prominence of inactivity, dirt, and bodily fluids. It can be compared to a grave/womb from which the individual then emerges anew.

The concept of rites of passage, and the central aspect of liminality is fruitful in many cultural contexts. For instance, rites of passage embrace experiences that resemble

liminality, having the same magic and transformative aura yet incorporating many aspects of structure and occurring in non-obligatory contexts (especially in Western societies), which are described as liminoid (Turner 1995 [1969]:xi. 165). The rite of passage model has been employed to discuss Christian pilgrimage (Turner and Turner 1978) as well as international tourism (Graburn 1978).

Daumas records the proverb "L-hinna trab j-jinna" (Henna is the soil of heaven) (Daumas, 1983[1869]:476). While clearly understood as a metaphor, this rhyme suggests the close association we find between henna and religion in Muslim societies. Henna is used as a marker of the liminal phase in many Muslim life cycle rituals, most notably so in the various rituals surrounding first marriage. Van Gennep has remarked on the significance of the first instance, citing the proverb "Only the first time counts" (Van Gennep, 1960:175). Second marriage ceremonies, cross-culturally as in Morocco, take a less elaborate form. The common feature of many occasions on which henna is used is recognized by Vonderheyden, who indicates

> The first marriage (which will possibly be followed by several others) is the most important event in the life of a Muslim woman. It is, beyond compare, a moment of *passage* from one state to another. (Vonderheyden, 1934a:55, author's emphasis, my translation)

The henna thieves represent, furthermore, a ritual of reversal, as the bride and the young women engage in a momentary digression from social norms, and then return to accepted female roles and confirm the status quo. Dressing in rags, running in the street at a time of great seriousness, and begging from neighbours are all behaviours that turn upside down the dignified and restrained composure that the bride will adopt the following week, and to a lesser extent, for the rest of her life.

Figure 5.1: Bride's hands, marrakshi design

The eye constitutes a further enhancement of the design's protective effect. The wide-sleeved garment is a dark green (hence also protective) velvet gown. Note that the design depicted here extends well below the wrists.

Drawing by Stephanie Weirathmuller, after photograph by author.

Ritual is plastic. While Claude Levi-Strauss argued that, bereft of words, ritual is a paralanguage, while myth is a metalanguage, David Parkin contends ritual's silence makes it more powerful. Employing words optionally, and changing them as necessary, ritual has "a distinctive potential for performative imagination that is not reducible to verbal assertions" (Parkin, 1992:11-12). Ritual's capacity to shift form and meaning is restrained, Parkin writes, not by the competition of rivals who struggle to control ritual and thus maintain leadership roles, but through "agency by default," the critique of others' performance and communal response to this criticism.[4] The criticism of tourist sector henna artisans' work and behavior represents, in this view, an attempt to prevent symbolic slippage, the movement of henna's signification from one set of meanings (Prophetic example, first marriage, local tradition) to another set (Orientalism, international symbolic order, female economic independence).

Magic

Magic is another paradigm that can be used to understand henna's place in Moroccan society. The antiseptic property of henna that provides protection against illnesses, such as skin infections, that are perceived to have natural causes, is paralleled by a prophylactic effect that is considered effective against illnesses whose causes are thought to be supernatural. (Foster, 1976)

In this paradigm, henna's use at weddings, circumcisions, and childbirth would derive from its protective role. The alternate names of henna, as given by Sijelmassi (2000), used in some Moroccan Amazigh communities — *raquun, riqaan,* and *irqaan* — are a clue to this function. These terms share the same Arabic trilateral root as *ruqan*, a practice recommended by the Prophet to guard against evil. Ruqan involves reciting the last two chapters of the Qur'an in combination with "magic gestures such as blowing in the four directions or stroking one's face and other parts of the body" (Bürgel 1976:58).

Anthropologists have viewed magic as behaviors that intend to manipulate the supernatural in order to affect the outcome of events. In a classic presentation, James Frazer described two forms, contagious and homeopathic, of what he called sympathetic magic. Sympathetic magic, generally, is based on the belief that physical things are connected by an unseen bond that allows objects united by some common property to operate on each other at a distance. Contagious magic relies on the principle that parts of a whole retain an unseen connection with each other even after the contact has been severed; this principle applies to parts of a body, or to things that were once in contact with a body. The second form of sympathetic magic is called homeopathic magic; like homeopathic medicine, it employs the principle that like produces like. (Frazer, 1993 [1922])

Henna practices employ both principles. Through the law of similarity, its red blood-like aspect anticipates (or magically promotes or produces) the appearance of blood at events that must, normatively, produce blood/life. The use of henna in this way reproduces humanity's early use of ochre to redden both brides and corpses destined for the afterlife. To this, however, we add the example of the Prophet that has been transmitted to the community through oral and written tradition reflected in the hadith. Through the law of contagion, henna transfers the protective blessing of the Prophet and the orthodoxy of established religious tradition to those who wear it.

Early twentieth century ethnographic literature on Morocco emphasizes the employment of magic in areas including agriculture, social relations, and health (Westermarck, 1914, 1926, 1933; Laoust, 1920; Legey, 1926). There is also some suggestion elsewhere in the ethnographic literature of henna practices that recall sympathetic magic. Referring to India, for instance, Bhanawat notes that families who cannot purchase carpets, as is traditional for the Hindu festival of Diwali, instead paint henna designs that resemble carpets on the hands of the household women (Bhanawat, 1976:12). We may see this as sympathetic magic: drawing a carpet where one is lacking is appropriate and auspicious. The contemporary practice in Morocco of drawing rings and bracelets with henna mirrors this.

Like ochre, which changes from yellow to red as it is heated and when mixed with water or other liquid, resembles blood and other organic substances, suggesting magical transformation (Wreschner, 1980:632), the very aspect of henna indicates instrumentality. Henna leaves are milled into a green powder. The bright green powder is mixed with water, a clear liquid, to obtain a like-colored paste that soon turns brown,

and then dries black on the skin. The paste never turns red, but it turns the skin red. The paste washes off, but the color doesn't. Bhanawat (1976) gives us several Indian riddles that play on this enigmatic quality.

The protective blessing conferred by henna is emphasized through social practices. Moroccans greet women wearing henna with the phrase, "B-sahtik" (to your health). The hennaed woman's response is "Llah ya'tik s-shha" (God give you health). This is a sign that points to the meaning of henna in Moroccan society. Along with market prices, health, illness, and healthcare are among the most common topics of conversation among women in low-income Moroccan households. Ethnographic data from the early part of the twentieth century indicates the salience of this topic. In Agourai, a village 28 kilometers south of Meknes, each household lost on average five children in youth, while two survived (Herber 1923:90). The cause of death was personalized as the *tabii'a* (the follower), and different measures were taken to protect from it.

Heel tattoos are explained in this way. Herber contends that heel tattoos are intended not to protect the heel, but the person (Herber 1923:89-90). Different designs, including interlaced V's, juxtaposed crosses, and crosses with dots in each angle, were described as prophylactic against the tabii'a mentioned above, although no single design was said to be established by tradition (Herber 1923:91). Women are especially vulnerable through their heels, since the foot is the only part of the body not covered by the *haik* (cloak), and it is visible from behind.

Particular concern over the unintentional harm caused by jealousy and admiration is expressed as fear of the "eye" (*l-'ayn*), which is capable of causing

misfortune, including death. An early twentieth century Moroccan proverb says the eye "owns two-thirds of the burial ground" (Westermarck, 1904:211). Westermarck notes that brides, in particular, are subject to the eye (Westermarck, 1904:211). Traditionally, a bride's face is heavily adorned with cosmetics, including *harquus*, a dark pigment that is often applied in patterns to the surface of the skin (Herber, 1929).[5] Henna covers the hands and feet, the only other exposed parts of the body. Despite the present emphasis on elaborate, well-executed designs, the primary function of the bride's henna is not decorative, but rather protective. This henna carries baraka — power, blessing, protection. It is applied to the physical body in order to affect the metaphysical one (Kapchan 1996:159).

We can draw a parallel between henna/tattoo use and Malinowski's description of Trobriand seafaring magic. In the interior lagoon, where both fishing and weather were good, Trobrianders did not use ritual. On the open seas, however, magic was extensively employed against the uncertainty of open sea conditions, which affected both fish and weather (Malinowski 1922). George Gmelch's popular article "Baseball Magic" draws on this characterization, as he notes that magic is used rarely by outfielders, who can predict outcomes with great certainty, and used with great frequency by pitchers and hitters, who can't (Gmelch 1997). The great uncertainty associated with rites of passage during which henna is used similarly suggests a magical role in these instances.

In Morocco, henna application plays a focal role in the crucial life cycle rituals of first marriage and circumcision. Both events are uncertain and gravely significant. Marriage is a primary aspect of young women's (and, to a lesser extent, men's) life strategy: its success requires both fertility and good social relations, though these are no

guarantee. The wide variety of ethnomedical practices that aim to improve women's fertility indicates the salience of this issue in women's lives; presumed sterility is the primary cause for divorce (Akhmisse, 2000:95).[6] The danger and uncertainly experienced at marriage may be given physical form, such as the Moroccan jinn *khaattaf l-'araais*, the bride thief, against which henna is an effective protection (Vonderheyden, 1934a:55).

A Moroccan proverb says, "A marriage without children is short for men" (Attar, 1999:96). Men's continued rapid and easy access to both divorce and polygyny increases the uncertainty women experience (Blanc and Zeidguy, 2000; Buskens, 2003).[7] The Moroccan press reported a contemporary study carried out between 1997 and 1999 by the justice ministry which found that one third of divorces concerned marriages that had taken place less than a year earlier, and that 8.3 of divorced women were virgins. (*Citadine*, Feb 2001, p.12)[8] The same study reported that 57 percent of women seeking the aid of fortune tellers and witches were between 20 and 30 years old, and sought help in finding a husband or in preserving a marriage. We might anticipate that the decline in men's henna use at first marriage is consistent with their relative (but not absolute) control over outcomes, which is made concrete in their capacity to divorce.

No less than marriage, circumcision, too, represents a time of celebration, danger, and uncertainty. The survival of sons is closely linked to women's well-being, as men retain primary financial responsibility for female kin in case of the latter's divorce or widowhood. The survival of a young son from birth to the age of five is an important threshold, since mortality dramatically decreases at this point. Yet, at this crucial juncture, there is a final trial as the boy undergoes an operation that recognizes him as a member of the Muslim community. The application of a knife to his penis with the

intention of removing the foreskin potentially jeopardizes his life, and integrity as a fertile individual. The celebration of his survival is cause for jealousy among childless women, and henna (used with *harmel* [African rue, botanical name *Peganun harmala*], green tassels, and other amulets) offers further protection. Henna application to the male child, and to his mother and female kin at this time when he has emerged through the trial of infancy suggests attention to these dangers.

Particular attention should be paid to the rites in which henna is applied to the whole body. These include the ghmata (wrapping) of a newborn child, as well as the application of henna to a bride's entire body (as opposed to the decorative application to her hands and feet) in the week before her wedding. Like other henna practices in which the paste or powder is applied to the entire body, the ghmata (wrapping) is a ritual reinforcement of the individual's outer membrane, the boundary that had been reinforced by the mother's body, and now alone separates the child from the world. The bride's body, too, is reinforced with henna, for similar reasons of imminent disruption (intercourse), and shrouded, as the baby is, in cloth. Infants are thought to be close to death at this time, and both brides and babies are especially subject to the unintentional harm caused by admiration and innocent jealousy. Tauzin writes (in relation to henna use in Mauritania),

> The primary virtue of henna, the one that doubtlessly was the first to be attributed to it, is to protect the individual, to form a barrier between the body that is coated with it and harmful external elements, which are demons, the evil eye, or sicknesses. (Tauzin, 1998:16, my translation)

Additionally, as many informants attested, henna acts to transfer the heightened sensory experience of first marriage to women's and men's daily erotic subjectivity. Tasneem noted that she could not wear henna for this reason, since she worked in an

environment where she was in regular contact with men. Here, the logic of Frazer's law of contagion approaches contemporary Western understandings of psychological association as henna's significance in the marriage night gives an erotic cast to women's use of it on other occasions. Because of the importance given to reserving the first application of henna to the feet for the wedding night (i.e. first sexual intercourse), henna applied to this part of the body is most likely to take on this erotic significance. One local sector artisan said to me that men cannot see henna on women's feet "without thinking of what is between." Although, as Tasneem intimated, even simple hand designs can also provoke these thoughts in some men.

It is important to recognize that henna practices are only part of the repertoire used to protect the individual during these dangerous moments of life change. Hilma Granqvist's careful study of birth and childhood rituals among Muslim Arabs in Palestine mentions henna use only in the context of bridal application, notably omitting it in her extensive discussion of circumcision. For instance, boys are decorated with a blue spot on the forehead, not with a red henna mark on the hand as in Morocco (1947:194). Nor is henna used in this community at birth, when a red cloth is sewn to the child's first clothes (1947:99), or when red earth is sprinkled on an infant who is considered vulnerable because its siblings had died as babies (1947:102). This red earth ground over a stone is also brought for women in childbirth to sit on. The earth is then placed in a sack, along with other body parts including the umbilical cord and foreskin, and buried so that the child is not made vulnerable. The similarity between henna and red earth, and the association of red earth with the earlier ocher practices that henna may have supplanted with the advent of Islam, is especially interesting.

Purification

Purity, more specifically the distinction between ritual purity and impurity, is a central concern in Islam, most clearly evident in the guidelines for cleanliness of the body (for prayer) and of food (for consumption). In the lunar month of Ramadan, particularly, these two are joined together, as adult believers engage in fasting (separation) from food, drink, and sexual activity from sunrise to sunset. Henna is applied at the end of the preceding month, to mark the beginning of this period, and at the end of the month of fasting. (Kapchan, 1996)

As one of the practices mentioned by the Prophet, henna is considered Islamic, blessed and authorized by religion. It is notably used at the four important religious holidays in North Africa ('Ashura, Muluud, 'Iid s-Sghiir, 'Iid l-Kbir), as well as during shrine visits. Vonderheyden contends that the role of henna in the lives of women and children is analogous to the role of prayer and ablutions in the lives of men. Men purify themselves through ablutions and prayer, while women purify themselves with henna: each thus procures the state of sanctity necessary for participation in religious celebrations (Vonderheyden, 1934a:48). Bourrilly argues, in a similar vein, that henna is used to purify both spouses before a marriage is consummated (in Field, 1958:97).

This position is problematized by the wide variety of contexts in which henna is used. The application of henna to the sacrificial ram is not universally practiced, nor is there is any indication that the ram that is sacrificed at 'Iid is considered otherwise impure, despite the shedding of its blood. By contrast, this meat is considered especially auspicious, and some products (especially the bile gland) of the sacrificed ram are reserved for magical/medical use within the household.

Yet, the shedding of blood in other contexts does suggest impurity. While women who die during childbirth are martyrs who go straight to heaven, as we are told in the hadith, the blood that follows delivery (*nifas*) constitutes an impediment to prayer. (Khattab, 1996:12) In this view, Vonderheyden's theory suggests that henna acts to neutralize the dangerously impure situation. Yet there is no evidence that this form of impurity can be removed by the use of henna or any other substance. Menstruating women, for instance, are not only prohibited from entering the mosque, but they are also prohibited from private ritual (though not supplicatory) prayer. This prohibition cannot be removed by washing, nor can it be altered by the application of henna. In the societies of the United Arab Emirates, as Aida Kanafani, the impurity of menstruation impedes the use of substances (perfume oils) that are considered auspicious.

While Vonderheyden's interpretation remains problematic, it contributes to the development of a complex and layered understanding of henna practices. Susan Searight, inspired by Vonderheyden's work, suggests that henna produces not purity, but *baraka*, a state of grace, in the one to whom it is applied, as I have suggested in the previous section. In this respect, henna contrasts with tattooing, which is condemned in Islam (Herber, 1921; Searight, 1984).[9] Searight writes,

> Henna is religiously approved, it has baraka and it is festive in color. So it is widely used in Islamic countries for decoration and, being auspicious, can also be useful in other fields, for the placating of jnoun [spirits], for instance. It is hence both decoration and protection at the same time. No one lives in a state of perpetual gaiety, however, and over-spending of baraka can be dangerous – so the need to renew henna provides a cyclical activity that gives life festive occasions. In turn, cyclical activities provide occasions for henna staining. (Searight, 1984:158)

Like other repeated symbols, such as the repetition of the fatiha (the first chapter of the Qur'an) and the use of the color green, henna brings significant life cycle rituals into a structure legitimized by religious orthodoxy.

Blood and sacrifice

Henna's red color suggests blood, and the frequency of its use in rituals that involve (or normatively involve) blood has suggested that henna is a proxy for blood, a representation and an equivalent (Combs-Schilling, 1989). Drawing blood, argues Elaine Combs-Schilling, is a male prerogative and an act that creates adult masculinity during the wedding ritual as well as during the sacrifice of a hennaed ram by the male head of household at 'Iid l-Kbiir. The use of henna-blood at weddings, then, repeats and underlines this tie between the bride and the ram. In contemporary Morocco, where the actual virginity of the bride is no longer assured, the presence of henna/blood has been retained as an important symbol of her normative virginity. This is a potent analysis, but not one that should go unexamined.

Establishing the link between henna and blood, Combs-Schilling notes that a girl's first henna application occurs at the time of her first menstruation (Combs-Schilling, 1989:212). This did not seem to be the case in the low-income urban community where I did my fieldwork, though this digression itself seems to support Combs-Schilling's interpretation. In interviews, women explained that a girl's first elaborate henna application may occur at her ear-piercing ceremony, itself a moment that refers to first sexual intercourse through both the physical action of penetrating the body and drawing blood, and through its naming. *Tabqa* is used both for an ear-piercing ceremony for young girls, as well as sexual penetration, and particularly, first sexual

intercourse. In S-Suuq l-Qdiim, the ear-piercing ceremony takes place between the ages of six and nine, and is timed to coincide both with the circumcision of a brother and, crucially, with the availability of resources for a community celebration. During this celebration, the young girl is dressed as a bride and presented to the community. The use of henna/blood here is appropriate and significant.

Figure 5.2: Young girl at ear-piercing ceremony

This photograph was taken at the young girl's ear-piercing (tabqa) ceremony. She is dressed in a white lace dress in the style of a European bride, which is also one of the multiple dresses worn by contemporary Moroccan brides in the course of the wedding ceremony. Both her dress and the gold plate jewelry she wears were rented for the occasion from a wedding professional (neggafa).

Drawing by Stephanie Weirathmueller, after photograph obtained from subject's family.

Perhaps a greater problem that emerges in this analysis is the use of henna at male circumcision. Combs-Schilling glosses over the shedding of male blood during circumcision, and overlooks the hennaed hands of the circumcised boy, which I described at length in Chapter 2. For men, then, the smell and sight of henna brings to mind the erotic moments of first marriage, but also — and equally so — the pain of circumcision. Nonetheless, when we consider the function of circumcision in confirming

and welcoming males into the Muslim community, the correspondence of wedding henna and circumcision henna seems appropriate. Both are instances of bloodshed that enhance masculinity.

A final comment on Comb's-Schilling's paradigm is the location of agency. The henna of marriage and circumcision is applied by women. Their intervention here, at a moment that is interpreted to represent male agency, is a fundamental inversion. What we would see, instead, is the assertion/insertion of a female operator in the supposedly definitively male act. The parallel between bride and ram is balanced by an equally powerful parallel between female agent and male agent.

Aesthetic performances

In Chapter 3, I argued that the aesthetic component of henna practices had been over-emphasized by the turn toward commoditization, which has given priority to craft over context. I would not imply that craft is without its own social meaning, however. In her study of women's body rituals in the United Arab Emirates, Aida Kanafani (1984) shows how pastes, perfumes, and clothing are applied to the body in an aesthetic performance that mirrors the use of spices and heat to make raw food into something beautiful, artistic, and above all, meaningful. These substances socialize raw material, and bring it into conformation with the group's ideas about what is permitted and what is not, what is pure and what is impure. Individuals use these performances to display personal refinement and status.

Kanafani draws our attention to the variety of ways in which women in the United Arab Emirates socialize their bodies and use these body practices to demonstrate their cultural competence to other community members. She writes,

> Every day for seven days following the wedding, female guests come to congratulate the bride, the groom and their parents ... Guests come heavily scented and wearing their most beautiful clothes ... Redolent with perfumes, glittering with jewellery, [the bride] sits on the floor, a thin muslin veil on her masked face, her hands on her knees, and looking down ... One of her relatives lifts the veil revealing the blushing masked face ... She is asked to look right and left with the mask on, then again with the mask off. She is asked to open her hands to display her beautifully decorated hennaed hands and each palm is separately looked at; to stretch her legs to show her hennaed feet and the perfect lines of the pattern; to show the plaited ankle band which decorates the end of her trousers; she is finally asked to walk so that her gait can be evaluated. The verdict then comes: the bride is complete, healthy, beautiful, and worthy of praise. (Kanafani, 1984:77)

Henna is only one of many important materials in this respect. Indigo, which is considered effective against the evil eye, is rubbed on the skin of newborns (Kanafani, 1984:53) and on the faces and bodies of brides-to-be (Kanafani, 1984:77, 78), while saffron oil, which is one of the most popular perfumes, is mixed into a colored paste that wedding guests apply to their faces (Kanafani, 1984:48).[10] Even clothing is drawn into this construction of the individual, as the bride transforms herself from child to teenager to bride and woman through the construction of her own unique masks that artistically conceal and reveal the aspects of her face she considers her best features. Henna and other substances draw the body into rituals, particularly rites of passage, intensifying the experience by pulling in the olfactory, tactile, and visual senses,[11] and displaying competence in the habitus of the community.

Marking the body, writing on the body

Abdelkebir Khatibi addresses the question of social meaning in reference to tattooing, another traditional Moroccan body practice, and one that has traditionally garnered much more attention than henna. Khatibi rejects the idea of a glossary of symbols, where each figure stands for a single meaning, as suggested by Sijelmassi, 1974,

and later repeated by Maurin-Garcia, 1996, among others.[12] The large-scale survey of tattooing practices carried out by Searight, 1984, supports Khatibi's rejection of a symbol "glossary". There is no evidence of a shared communication system of one-to-one correspondence between figure and meaning.

While henna is a long-lasting but temporary form of body modification, tattooing is permanent. Khatibi reminds us that body-marking is described in the Bible as a means of identifying people: the punished are permanently marked to identify them to others. In contrast, henna dying eventually fades, and the body returns to its previous state.[13] Henna marks an event, a phase, not a person or a permanent status. The Moroccan bride's transition from girl to woman is not indelibly marked on the external body, despite the marking of this transition during the period in which it occurs. The loss of the hymen is both unapparent and reparable. Khatibi argues that the lengthy application of henna to the bride parallels the legal and physical appropriation of her body by the groom.

The idea of appropriation and power has been taken up again in the context of South Asian henna rituals observed in New York by Phyllis Gorfain. She remarks, "her bridal body is marked as a liminal and her condition is expressed as a passive, aesthetic, and corporeal text for the inscription of meanings" (Gorfain, Kapchan, and Young, 1996:86), much in the same way that Foucault described the body of the "inscribed surface of events" (1980:148). Or words can be the body. In the text-portraits of the Prophet and his family, letter-shapes are used by calligraphers to recreate human images that are normatively prohibited in Islam (Schick, 2001).

The inscription of henna fits well with the conceptualization of writing as control. Yet the female dominated structure of the henna ceremony suggests subversion of the groom's possession of the bride: through physical action of applying henna, accompanied by songs that praise her and encourage her to be strong in her marriage, the bride is being inscribed by/into a circle of female kin. Here, henna is less the blood of sacrifice than the blood of birth which is mediated by women. Gorfain continues,

> Perhaps the bride is marked as liminal and immobile, but other women, as specialists, regulate and conduct all the ceremonies. Women alone handle the bodies of others and sing the songs that assert a female-centred view of men, in-laws, and marriage. Similarly, innovations – in the technology of mehendi painting, in the performance of and materials for customs, and in the formulae and motifs for the songs – express tensions between tradition and immigrant assimilation. (Gorfain, Kapchan, and Young, 1996:86)

Henna in the tourist sector

In 1998-1999, the period during which I prepared for my comprehensive exams as well as for my return to the field for a second stay, henna was integrated into global cultural imaginaries of embodied spirituality, modern primitivism, and international ethnic chic. American pop stars, including Madonna, Gwen Stefani, and Demi Moore, had been photographed with elaborate Indian-style henna, and these images were re-staged and reproduced in various media, including books, websites, advertising, and consumer products (in the form of not only henna kits, but also skin pencils and adult-oriented rub-on tattoos). In streets, at fairs, and in shopping malls, I began to encounter henna artisans who had no ethnic ties to societies where henna rituals are practiced. By contrast, however, some of these artisans used a discourse of authenticity in which they established their own chain of transmission,[14] explaining that they had personally

observed (or, most preferably "learned") the technique during travels abroad (India and Morocco, primarily) or from a later transmitter in a chain going back to this original source.

When I returned to Morocco in June 2000, I was not surprised to find that the tourist sector henna economy had expanded significantly. A brief comment appeared in the gossip section of one of the national newspapers, noting that this was a surprising and recent phenomenon, and asking dryly if the syringes used were sterile.[15] In the towns on the tourist circuit, for artisans, for Moroccan observers, as well as for tourists, both international and domestic, henna had come to signify something entirely different from membership in the cultures for which henna has traditionally been a significant component of life cycle and calendrical rituals. It was transformed into a souvenir, one of the many "markers and mementos of the tourist's journey" (Jules-Rosette, 1984:3). Where David Howes has remarked that imported goods take on new meanings as they are integrated into specific contexts (1996:5), here we see that indigenous goods take on new meanings as well as they are integrated into transnational exchanges physically located in the place of production.

Characteristics of tourist-oriented henna market

Where fewer than a dozen girls and women were visible as tourist sector artisans in S-Suuq l-Qdiim in 1998, by the summer of 2000, twenty regular full-time artisans were present. Furthermore, a conservative estimate of sixty artisans moved in and out of the market as occasional or part-time workers. Many of them wear distinctive face veils while working, a gesture that at once obscurs their identity and inner state to some

extent, and also clearly marks them to local residents and to Moroccan tourists as tourist sector henna artisans.

Many of the artisans are widows, daughters of widows, or divorced women with or without children. The absence of powerful male figures – healthy wage-earning fathers, husbands, or adult brothers – allows them to forcefully present their own narratives of personal behavior and public morality. All but a few of the artisans belong to stable informal groups of three or four women who purchase and manage supplies collectively, do not compete between themselves for customers, and collectively defend a recognized territory from other artisans in competing groups.

These cooperative groups provide essential social support, and serve as channels through which knowledge is communicated. Informal groups provide a setting in which new artisans learn techniques of identifying and approaching customers on several languages, marketing their product through verbal and physical performance, setting a price and dealing with large sums of cash, along with the craft-related skills of acquiring and preparing supplies and applying henna in several standard patterns.

Although most Moroccan women know how to mix henna and devise simple motifs, only specialists are paid to apply henna. For many of the artisans, the decision to apply henna professionally in the tourist market followed the personal and financial crisis of divorce or widowhood. Others, however, had sold baskets or other cheaply acquired local goods to tourists for several years, and later began to do henna for money — *naqsh bil fluus.* Artisans said that several years ago, tourists began wanting to have henna done, and asked about it in the hotels, and so women who had hotel connections began to do henna there. The large hotels continue to arrange henna application for their customers,

and formally or informally take a percentage of the artisans' profits. The emergence of marketplace henna, structured by the cooperative group, soon followed.

The groups split earnings evenly at the end of each morning, afternoon and evening, allowing artisans a greater chance of taking home cash during the slow periods. Although the coldest winter months are slower, most artisans can earn between 100 and 200 dirhams each day, bringing their income into middle class range. An initial investment of 20 dirhams can be quickly recouped if working conditions are favourable. Thereafter, the cost:earnings ratio is about 1:100, excluding costs resulting from breakage and loss of equipment.

Social significance of henna work in the tourist sector

Henna income has allowed women to increase their status, particularly in economically less stable households, and to cope with large or irregular expenditures. One of the artisans, for instance, had managed to buy a large television and a new fridge for her daughter's family, with whom she lived. Her income cemented an otherwise insecure position in a struggling household.

Artisans frequently talk about their capacity to generate cash for periodic expenditures. At 'Iid l-Kbiir, for instance, every Moroccan household purchases one or several rams, as big as possible, to be slaughtered outside their door. The size of the ram is noted in dirhams, the Moroccan currency unit, rather than kilograms, and families compare 'Iid expenditures as measures of their accumulated prosperity, wealth management, and production capacity. Henna earnings have allowed many women to purchase their family's ram and, equally important, to make ends meet in the weeks after 'Iid. Purchasing the 'Iid l-Kbiir ram gives added meaning to artisans' productive capacity,

as access to cash allows them to occupy the symbolic position of absent men. (Here the link between the henna and the ram is very different from how it is conceived by Vonderheyden and Combs-Schilling.)

Despite this concrete contribution to their family's economic well-being, women's presence as marketplace artisans is not without problems. Traditional forms of henna work are not performed in spaces that are enclosed and traversed by male strangers, nor in fact, are there traditionally roles in these spaces or women at leisure, that is, customers of henna artisans.

In many ways, tourist henna in the public market is an inversion of domestic henna practices. In its customary form, henna is applied in the client's home, in the presence of female family members and guests. In contrast, marketplace henna is applied in the most public public. That which is excluded from the household — vehicles, animals, strangers, spitting, shouting, pushing — is considered normal in the marketplace. The marketplace is also where men gather to listen to erotic stories, watch transvestite dancers, and purchase remedies for sexual diseases and frustrations. There are respectable forms of entertainment too —gymnasts, fortunetellers — and sellers of remedies for other ailments including stomach illnesses and toothaches, but the marketplace, which can be imagined as Bakhtin's carnival, is clearly gendered.[16] Local women do frequent the square to see the crowd and eat from the food stalls, but only in family groups, often accompanied by male kin.

Tourist henna's inversion of customary practice is extensive. Customarily, the artisan is called to the household, fed as a guest, and then seated comfortably with the client on cushions and pillows. In the marketplace, the artisan runs after strangers, calls

to them to sell her services, and then brings the client back to an area that has been transformed into a domestic space by the addition of several low stools and a few bags of equipment, but also by the habitual action of the artisans who regularly occupy this space and thus turn it into a named and identifiable area. Artisans speak of each other's habitual area as their home —one says, for instance that someone has gone to "Khaddouj's place" as *'ind Khaddouj*, in the same fashion whether they are referring to her home or to her place on the pavement. Although artisans arrange their effects and position themselves to physically exclude strangers from the spaces, this home that is not a home has no walls to keep out strangers' glances.

Tourist henna and local henna

Tourist henna *is* distinct from what is done for the domestic market. It is easily recognizable by its irregular lines, its lack of density in composition, the high frequency of certain motifs such as vines and flowers, and the use of wavy lines to outline or fill in these motifs. Other characteristics that are very common in henna produced for the local population, such as the use of bisected lines in construction, ample use of negative space, and motifs such as sharply defined zigzags, are entirely absent. The sharp divergence in local and tourist production is linked to several factors. Most clear is the social stigma attached to women's work in this public space, which effectively discourages successful, skilled artisans from entering the tourist sector.

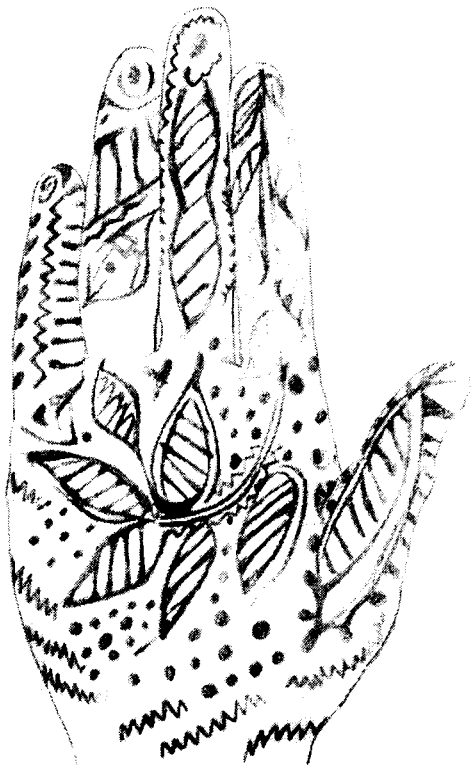
Though some artisans become very skilled over a period of time, tourist sector artisans have neither, at least initially, the technical competence nor the social network that would enable them to work steadily in local customers' homes.[17] Furthermore, even popular local sector artisans do not approach the income level attained by tourist sector

workers. Local sector prices are much lower, of course, but their market is also much smaller. Furthermore, the local sector is constrained by factors such as gender and life cycle norms that restrict henna use.

Artisans who work in the domestic market apprentice for several years as the *musaa'ida* or helper of an established artisan, during which time they master a broad graphic vocabulary. By contrast, tourist sector artisans are self-taught, or learn from watching artisans who are equally self-taught. The lack of transmission of technical knowledge between the two sectors is evident in the absence of a focal vocabulary relating to henna motifs in the tourist sector. While local sector artisans employ a wide variety of specialized terms for henna motifs and styles, tourist sector artisans do not demonstrate this extensive vocabulary in their spontaneous conversation or when asked to describe different designs.[18] On the other hand, tourist sector artisans display a wealth of knowledge — derived from observation, inference, and acquired from peers — on the identification, national traits, and consumption habits of the broad variety of tourists that visit the area.

Along with other tourist sector workers, henna artisans verbally create a product whose value has a substantial performative component. In this respect, they are much like the North American henna artisans, as tourist sector artisans aim to establish authenticity within their market sector. Tourists' questions about the origin of the design photos carried by artisans are parried by asserting that the artisan personally applied the henna depicted in the photo. Privately, artisans told me where to purchase photos and how much to pay for them.

Figure 5.3: Khaliji style, tourist sector



This illustration shows a henna design that had been retouched by a second artisan several days after the initial application. The initial design was composed of a central flower design that extended to the index finger; a second artisan reapplied henna to the flower, and filled in the surrounding area with dots and zigzags.

Drawing by Stephanie Weirethmuller, after photograph by author.

The technical distinctions between tourist and local sector work should not be reduced, however, to the single variable of skill. Nelson Graburn's work on the evolution of tourist art has suggested that the incorporation of expressive culture into tourist economies tends to produce two separate art forms, as production for local and tourist markets respond to different influences. Tourist art, for instance, moves toward miniaturization and portability as tourists seek items they can easily carry home in their suitcases.

In much the same way, tourist henna has been simplified not only because of the artisans' lower skill level hut also and especially as a result of consumers' desire for quickly drawn designs. As I sat with the artisans day after day, listening to questions posed by tourists during the information gathering and bargaining processes, it became

clear that next to cost, the time required for application and drying was a major concern for potential customers. Furthermore, as I learned to apply henna, artisans frequently discouraged me from using the doubled line technique that local sector artisans employ to create negative space. "Leave them. It takes too much time," one woman told me repeatedly. Indeed, many international tourists planned to spend only an hour or two in the marketplace that was my primary research site. The demand for detailed henna is limited by the physical discomfort of the setting, but also by many consumers' reluctance to allocate more than ten or fifteen minutes to the process.

Tourist henna is clearly distinct from what is done for the local market. But the spontaneous comment of one merchant who saw my decorated hands, "Ce n'est pas le henné, ça!"[That isn't henna!] raises the question, What is henna?

Meaning and ritual in Moroccan society

It is important to begin by acknowledging that henna exists within a contemporary social world marked by unequal distribution of resources and power. Bennetta Jules-Rosettes writes,

> It is a scholar's dream that meanings can be fixed by invoking their history. Philologists and semiologists show us how to trace the "real" meaning of a word by searching for its origins. Similarly, if we can discover the origins of an artwork it is believed that we might be able to locate the key to understanding it. (Jules-Rosette, 1984:25)

And so, particularly in Chapter 4, I have adopted a holistic approach that frames the relevant social world as including not only the urban and national contexts, but also the populations and structures of industrialized countries as the sometimes seen, sometimes unseen Other for Moroccans.[19]

Henna designs demonstrate regional trends, and so individual motifs do carry meaning that relates to location and networks. Beyond that, there is very little direct correspondence between symbols. To the extent of their fluency in French, Spanish, and English, henna artisans engage in performances that transform henna from a simple brownish design into a desired commodity. The scorpion, a common tourist henna motif, was suggested as a decoration for male tourists, "pour la chance" (for luck). Nonetheless, Susan Searight's country-wide study of Moroccan women's tattoos found no generalized one-to-one correspondence of motif and meaning, nor did I find evidence of this among traditional sector artisans, tourist sector artisans, or among the general population. Women described their henna designs in terms of personal preference, and often noted that certain designs were in or out of style.

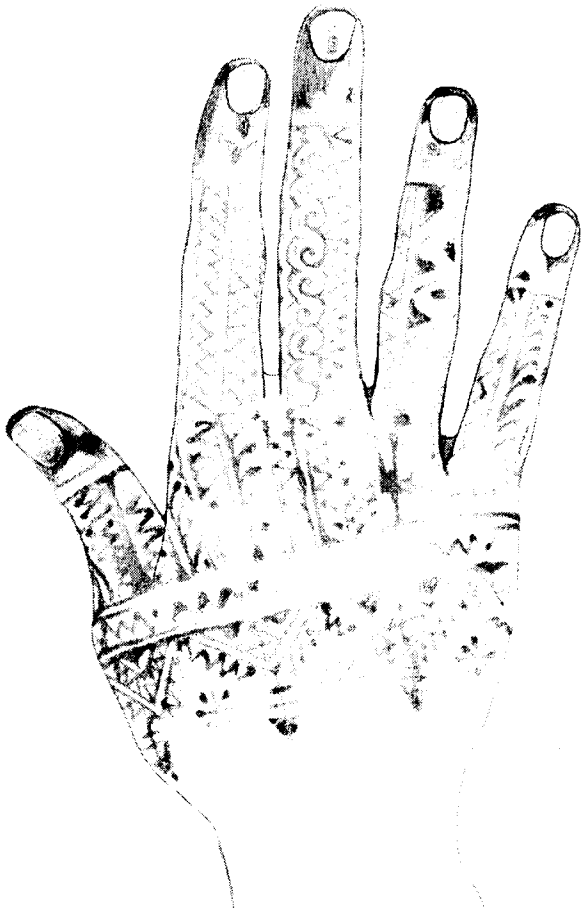
One instance of a motif to which specialists and non-specialists ascribed a distinct one-to-one meaning was a heart, under which one artisan wrote, in English, "LOVE" as she told me that was its meaning. On another occasion, I was told by a carpet merchant, again in English, "The meaning of henna is bread," "Bread?" I asked. "You know, money."

While I agree that tourist henna has a very significant economic value for those who produce it, I believe that it has other meanings as well. One of the characteristics of henna is its semi-permanence — it appears suddenly, rendering a part of the body immediately unfamiliar. It frames a moment, amid then marks the time that passes, as the motif fades. Judith Adler reflects on the communication of meaning through performance. She writes,

> Although the art of travel centers on the imaginative construction of encounters and passages, it has always included means by which fleeting

> experiences could be permanently marked or inscribed. Some marks (such as graffiti) may be left in the place of passage, while others (albums, journals, curios, and gifts) testify in the home world to the traveler's passage. (Adler 1989:1370)

Figure 5.4: Fidah, marrakshi style, local sector



This form, extending diagonally from the bottom of the thumb joint to just below the little finger, is called *fidah*. While forms that cover not only the hand but also the lower arm three to seven inches past the wrist are highly appreciated (as in figure 5.1), this design is said by artisans to be stylish. It is less work than more extensive designs as well. Although some artisans would use a six-pointed star rather than the eight-pointed variation here, this is classical marrakshi style. The differing shades evident in this illustration depict the fading of the design, in this case, after several weeks.

Drawing by Stephanie Weirethmuller, after photograph by author.

Female tourists often said that they enjoyed the opportunity to be with working class Moroccan women who are otherwise largely absent from tourists' experience. Some spoke of a sensation that they were able to communicate without words, as an artisan held their hands and they sat knee-to-knee as the henna was applied. For international tourists, it is an opportunity to incorporate the exoticism of the East, and then remember it with the body, reflecting on it as it fades from grasp.[20] Here as in the bridal henna, meaning is located in process, rather than product.

We can see other shades of meaning as well. A significant number of those who purchase marketplace henna – and the majority of some artisans' customers — are domestic tourists, Moroccans living abroad or in other cities. Moroccans working in Europe often engage in consumption patterns through which they expend a great proportion of their resources on and during periodic trips to Morocco, where these resources go substantially further and serve to help them create identities as socially and economically successful beings (Salih, 2002). Unlike international tourists, Moroccan tourists have a well-defined understanding of what good henna is. The large number of domestic tourists who had henna done at the market, despite its clear digression from the idealized norm, suggests that henna can be productively understood in a third manner. Henna marks a period of liminality that is associated not just with life cycle changes but with other rituals as well, and particularly encompassing travel, a valued and new marker of status for Moroccans who engage in domestic tourism.

As described in Chapters 2 and 3, henna is applied ritually to women at several times, including shortly before marriage, during some vows made at shrines, before childbirth, before a son's circumcision, and at the end of mourning following a spouse's death. On most of these occasions, henna is not applied in a decorative manner, but rather it is smeared over the hands or entire body. Before childbirth, in the area where I did my fieldwork, women's hands are quickly rubbed with henna before leaving for the hospital. There are other instances as well. The public and highly decorative application of bridal henna, for example, is preceded by a more intimate ritual in which a first-time bride is covered with a sheet, and her entire body is rubbed with dry henna powder. And the meaning-laden moment at which people photograph and pose with the bride is not

the revealing of the decoration when the henna is scraped off, but instead the moment when her hands and feet are fully covered with the wet paste.

Travel and/as ritual

The comparison between tourist — or rather traveler's —henna and other forms of ritual henna is productive, if we understand, as Dean MacCannell (1976) and Nelson Graburn (1989) do, that tourism is a potentially dangerous pilgrimage in which the individual enters a liminal state, then the lack of aesthetic correspondence between tourist henna and traditional forms is less important than it may initially seem.

Travel does have these connotations in contemporary Moroccan society. While travel (*rihla*) has strong associations with the acquisition of knowledge about others and about the self (El Moudden, 1990), it is clearly a gendered enterprise. Normatively, women should travel with a *mahram*, a male chaperone, if they should travel at all. A Moroccan proverb recorded by Edward Westermarck in the early part of the twentieth century holds that the man who does not travel is a fool, and the woman who travels is a fool (Westermarck, 1930). But, in practice, Moroccan women do travel, venturing into physically and socially dangerous intermediate spaces and roles. Henna mediates the mingling of categories that must be kept separate: girl and woman, life and death, rooted and unrooted. Considering Mary Douglas's concern with the separation of clean and unclean (Douglas, 1966), we can see henna for tourists as a ritual (in the sense of symbolic action rather than rite of passage) in which the work of the artisan integrates tourists (international as well as domestic) into the Moroccan symbol system.

The application of henna, within the household, to female visitors is a common practice in the area where this research was conducted. The transposition of this practice

to a public area is novel however. When I asked why Moroccan tourists get henna done in the market, one young girl said it was because they knew no one in the city, and didn't know how else to have it done. This explanation points to the network through which traditional henna artisans operate. But we can also interpret this practice in another fashion, one that makes sense of the many Moroccan tourists who visited the square with resident family members and have access to a local artisan if they desired.

Several of the artisans framed the application of henna in the square as the accomplishment of a prescribed ritual in the same way that a shrine visit requires the fulfillment of tasks in a set order and manner. "If you visit this city, and don't have henna done, it is like you are not visiting it at all," said one artisan, who called out to Moroccan tourists. The integration of henna into the tourist space is part of an increasingly fixed set of tourist practices that compare the city to a religious shrine.

For Moroccan tourists, the application of henna in the tourist square marks the experience of a global ritual, as they enact the role of cosmopolitans, seeking the American singer Madonna who in turn had been seeking India, another East.[21] This can be seen in the demand by both domestic and international tourists for novel forms such as armbands, anklets, and shoulder or bicep medallions, as well as novel motifs which they drew on a scrap of paper and asked the artisan to copy. One young Moroccan man, a domestic tourist, was proud to show me the henna design an artisan had created for him. It was in a novel place, on the back of his lower leg, and it was an equally novel design — the Adidas trademark. In this aspect, henna becomes a moment of self-expression and identification with an international social group of travelers and consumers. Leaving the artisan's stool, the tourist lingers and meanders in the square,

watching and listening, and guarding the henna from smudges as it dries. Lechte writes, in reference to Bakhtin's concept of carnival, that "the people in it are both actors and spectators simultaneously" (Lechte, 1994:8).

In fact, Judith Adler tells us that travel is an aesthetic performance, as individuals move through space in a stylistically prescribed way thereby creating and communicating meaning (Adler 1989:1368), and in much the same way, the adorned tourist also engages in an aesthetic performance. This henna allows Moroccans to present themselves as tourists, rather than residents. It is a marker of the liminal (or rather liminoid) phase, framing and drawing attention to it (Douglas, 1966:63-64).

In the square itself, tourism also operates to transform the gender of urban space and the relationship between local residents. The application of henna for tourists in the urban marketplace makes the marketplace into a space where women are at leisure, an intimate place. Artisans laugh and play among themselves, purchase and consume snack food, and form friendly and cooperative relationships with nearby male merchants. This reversal of social norms disturbs the moral order.

The sanctity of henna, drawn from its association with the Prophet and repeated in proverbs and rituals that underscore its religious orthodoxy, contrasts with the connotations of eroticism and female indulgence that derive from the marital night, on one hand, and female body care on the other. The popular connotation of the public bath or hammam with female homosexuality and immorality relies on a similar logic that suspects female congregation and leisure (Serhane, 2000:159-162). This suspicion is heightened by the delight with which many women view excursions to the hammam, which are (for most female members of the household) opportunities to escape the

discipline and drudgery of domestic work. The expulsion from the women's hammam at the precise time that boys become aware of their own sexuality and the bathers' nakedness provides grist for the elaboration of theories and fantasies about what occurs there.[22] As a result, the hammam is the subject of numerous moralizing tales in Arab culture, including one in which the devil says that he asked God for a home, and so God created the hammam. (Serhane, 2000:162)

In contrast to hammam practices, legitimized by association with worship, women's shrine visits in many Muslim societies are similarly subject to patriarchal critique, but (like henna application) offer the possibility of entering a space beyond male control (Betteridge, 1980; Tapper, 1990; Betteridge, 2002). The underlying tension between blessing and immorality is clarified and made material in the critique of tourist sector henna work. Male criticism of the artisans and their work incorporates existing social unease with women's leisure.

I have demonstrated throughout that art is located in a social context, and that changes in art forms (henna practices) reflect change in these social factors. Nelson Graburn (1999) reminds us that art plays a mediating role in cultural change, as external influences are translated and absorbed. The locally perceived authenticity of henna created for the tourist market is more than an academic question — it is closely related to the perceived legitimacy of the artisans. Tradition, as Jocelyn Linnekin writes, is reflexive and dialectical, as people "are also engaged in an invention of tradition as they live, and live up to, a model of culture" (Linnekin 1983:250). In Chapter 3, I described how, through speech and dress, artisans present themselves as "traditional" henna workers as they present their product to foreigners who were potential clients. Other

actors, however, also engage in the definition of "tradition," and use various tactics to assert their views.

Tradition, contestation, and global markets

In my field study, I found that policemen and soldiers who patrol the area demand daily payment of bribe money from the artisans whose status and presence in the marketplace is not officially acknowledged and regularized. The area where many of the tourist sector artisans work is recognized as a heritage site, and this label provides authority to those who argue that women have no official status there — "The henna artisans are new, they are not real henna artisans, if they were, they wouldn't come here," said one policeman who spoke to me about the artisans.[23]

An entry from my field notes provides a vivid description of an interaction between artisans and police. The text has been edited slightly to omit identifying information. This excerpt was written as I sat with the artisans' daughters, while one the guards was angrily throwing heavy wooden crates that flew past us.

> The girls came over and sat clown on the ground next to my feet — one almost on my feet, amid the other on my right side. They said the guards were mean and kept asking how late I was going to stay. Until you go, I said. Karima, the little one, said she wanted to sleep at my house. I said it was no fun — I don't have a t.v. Long conversation about silly things, but it kept coming back to "will I stay?". The guards — two of them started buzzing around again. First one started throwing wooden crates in our direction. They handed two and a half feet from us on my right. I put my arms around Karima — was worried that something would break off and hit us. Boushra, the older one, stood up but stayed very close touching us. Khaddouj was with a customer and neither of them moved. Karima kept saying to me *ma tenmshish*. "Don't go" – or "you are going?" That went on for a bit, then he started harassing the girls who were sitting on boxes at Khaddouj's usual spot, a bit to the right of where we were. When they got up, he threw those boxes at us too. A few times the guard came over and stood right next to us — I'm still on the ground — and said "Get up." Khaddouj would say yes — iyyeh — but with little conviction and didn't look at me and didn't move, Karima kept looking

> at me and saying "ma temshish." ... Two big motorbikes come in fast and stop by Khaddouj's right side. Drivers are off-duty police. They just sit there and talk with the guard who has been harassing us. Slowly things seem to calm down but everyone still seems nervous. Finally one police officer comes with two stools and gives them to two of the women.
>
> A few days later: A guard walks by Khaddouj and says "Go away." She replies, "Hadi l-kariya diyah' [This is my apartment] — and doesn't move. Khaddouj is reminding the guard of their contract.

These events are part of a cycle in which artisans are tolerated as long as they pay bribes and until their numbers increase past an uncertain threshold. In this period of apparent balanced reciprocity, the artisans and the officials are engaged in a friendly opposition, as they inquire about each others' health and families, artisans pay bribes, and the police allow them to work unhindered. The perception of danger decreases. Consequently, the number of artisans gradually increases, although particularly pleasant or particularly hot weather causes a sharp increase. When the number of artisans increases beyond the tolerance of the officers' superiors, the police begin to prohibit the artisans from working within the square. The artisans move to the perimeter, and many leave the area entirely. When the artisans return, again in small numbers, they refuse to pay the bribes because the police had not maintained their part of the agreement. At this point, the behavior of the police shifts from half-hearted attempts to shoo away the artisans to violent and angry outbursts in which they seize and break the artisans' materials. The cycle is ended with the intervention of one or more superior officers whose involvement has been solicited through the personal networks maintained by the artisans. The officers are calmed by the intervention, the artisans begin to pay again, and the cycle recommences.

The struggle between the artisans and the authorities has several implications. Most fundamentally, it demonstrates the continuing salience of women in the public discourse about social change. As Vanessa Maher has written,

> ... it seems that in times of social upheaval, when economic and power relations are convulsed and ill-defined, women and their roles become doubly invested with symbolic significance for the relationships among men, but that these symbols are drawn from the moral context believed to be proper to the traditional society, which is itself an ideological abstraction. In other words, in Morocco too, women have been forced to represent a traditional model of social reality for the purposes of men. (Maher, 1978:101)

Comments about tourist sector henna, while objectively referring to the different technical and aesthetic norms of that sector, also refer to something else that is not henna. These comments are part of a social discourse in which tourist sector henna is an example, a case, a demonstration.

This discourse highlights the tension between the economic roles of men and women in Moroccan society. When I discussed these interactions with men in my working class urban neighborhood, they argued that the police needed to get the bribes because their salaries were so low. The police have a rightful claim on a part of the income earned by those who work directly with tourists. One person said that bribes were an expected part of policeman's salary -- otherwise, why would anyone work for so little? In fact, police and soldiers, as I heard frequently from both middle class and working class people, earn a minimum salary of 3200 dirhams a month. This is roughly equal to the earnings of a full-time artisan, most of whom augmented policemen's salaries with bribes.

Nonetheless, the salient comparison was not with the henna artisans, but with tourists, whose conspicuous consumption provided a measuring stick against which

many people measured their own prosperity. In that perspective, the violence against the artisans is a proxy for displays of resentment toward the international capital regime that enables even poor foreigners to consume Morocco, as it were. Policemen, henna artisans, and other merchants want to consume too.

Public discourse about the women selling henna in the marketplace also incorporates local debates on gender and the family. Henna artisans are not the only Moroccan women working in the tourist-oriented marketplace — there are similar numbers of female bread and basket sellers and fortunetellers. These are low status jobs as well, but not stigmatized to the extent the henna artisans are, nor are these workers harassed by the police. When I remarked that these women were supporting their families, just as the police were, neighborhood men countered that it was the responsibility of women's families to support them. "If a woman is good," one said, "then her brother or someone from her family will take care of her."

The neighborhood women expressed similar views that the maintenance of a divorced or widowed woman is the responsibility of her kin. Kin networks continue to be the primary social support system in Morocco for men and women of all income groups. This profitable public entrepreneurship of a small group of women from low-income groups presents a challenge to others' claims for support. This finding affirms Homa Hoodfar's conclusion that what she calls the "Islamic ethos" of low-income Egyptian women has a material basis, as women emphasize their customary religious right to economic support from husbands and kin – something that is quickly eroding. (Hoodfar, 1996, 1997)

The struggle also highlights tension between different social and economic groups regarding the distribution of tourism income. As an economic development strategy, tourism has been only partially successful. While contributing to the growth of the national economy and to the creation of luxurious neighborhoods, tourism has not generally been successful in creating a long-term, stable increase in the standard of living of poorer people. Both the police and the artisans are attempting to draw money out of the international economy of pre-arranged guided tours and hotel chains.

It is important not to over-emphasize the gender and class dimensions. Focusing our lens solely on gender and culture causes us to miss the factors that are outside the local context of henna artisans and policemen, and outside the regional environment of gender relations organized on axes of honor and shame. Male and female actors are much more concerned with the unequal distribution of resources and opportunities on a global scale, and if the artisans accept to pay bribes, it is because the rigid linguistic and social boundary that separates tourist and local sector henna allows them to dramatically increase prices in the tourist market.

To conclude, my argument is that while the newly-emerged tourist-sector henna trade is, in many ways, an inversion of customary practices, tourist henna can be viewed from a ritual standpoint as coherent with other henna rituals performed before weddings, childbirth, and so on in its shared function of mediating liminality. It becomes a symbol that unites disparate moments, and brings them into a framework of shared cultural references that point, eventually, to religious orthodoxy. The novelty and profitability of this trade, however, in the outdoor marketplace provokes criticism of both the end product and the artisans who are the producers. That these two are both

targets of comment is significant. My research has suggested that these challenges are closely tied to concerns about the continued maintenance of local cultural values including kin-based support systems, on one hand, and to a general sense of exclusion from tourism-generated income, on the other.

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[1] In this sense, it is useful to recall Marcel Mauss's perspective of the total social phenomenon whose interpretation "must include not only all the discontinuous aspects, any one of which (family, technical, economic) could serve as an exclusive basis for the analysis, but also the image that any of its indigenous members has or may have of it" (Augé, 1995:21).

[2] For an elegant problematization of the notion of fieldwork as bounded terrain with immobile bodies, see Clifford, 1997. I have responded to Clifford's critique here in emphasizing the physical as well as cultural movement of the actors in this research.

[3] Ritual instrumentality adds another dimension to the division of art the categories of functional and non-functional, and inward (locally)-directed and outward (tourist)-directed. See Graburn, 1989.

[4] In this view, individuals gain leadership in rituals, not through direct competition, but through the decision to leave the organization of ritual to the individual who expresses criticism of it.

[5] There are numerous recipes for harqus. Most contain some form of ash. The ethnographic literature surveyed in Herber 1929 includes the following recipes: India ink (Wazzan, 1921); gall (Doutté, 1914); gall, oleander ash, and soot (Legey, 1926); wood ash, spices, and pitch (Meakin, 1902); wood ash, spices, and tar (Westermarck, 1921); as well as several he discovered in his own research: burnt sap and walnut leaves (Moulay Idris region); soot and oil; pulverized coal and oil (Herber, 1929:60).

[6] In his survey of Moroccan ethnomedicine based on three years service in a Moroccan hospital, Thierry stated that a woman who had not produced children could be repudiated and returned to her family, who would be obliged to repay the brideprice (Thierry, 1917:61). For a considered analysis of contemporary socioeconomic aspects of fertility, see Bourqia, 1996. Bourqia argues that the continued high fertility of Moroccan women reflects not technical incompetence but rather legal (and hence economic and social) subordination. See also Inhorn, 1994, for an ethnographic account of infertility in Egypt that highlights the emotional rather than economic motives for Egyptian women's desire for children. Obermeyer, 1995, presents a number of case studies, including Bourqia, 1995, that confirm our interpretation of the significance of fertility for Moroccan women.

[7] Men's legal capacity to engage in simultaneous marriages with up to four women has led to the circumstance of abandoned wives, who are neither maintained nor divorced. While economic support is a legal right of wives, low-income women rarely go to court to request divorce in these cases because of the negative social repercussions. Some abandoned wives continue to hope that their spouses will recant and return, and indeed (as in Canada), some relationships are repeatedly ruptured and reconstituted. A critique of Morocco's personal status laws from a feminist point of view that is securely anchored in progressive theology can be found in MUR, 2000.

[8] One informant told me of her friend who unwittingly married a man who was both partially paralyzed, of which she was cognizant, and impotent, of which she was not. The bride was torn between her desire to have children and her wish to preserve a marriage that was considered beneficial by both families involved.

[9] Herber argues that the prohibition on tattooing is implicit in the Quranic verse (4:118) (Herber, 1921:2). This verse states,

> God has laid his curse on Satan, for he has said: 'I shall entice a number of Your servants and lead them astray. I shall arouse in them vain desires and order them to slit the ears of cattle. I shall order them to tamper with God's creation.'

Hence, in the religious view, physical modification of the body (which includes tattooing) is inspired by Satan. *Hadith Bukhari* includes the words of the Prophet, "God curses the tattooer and the tattooed" (in Herber, 1921:2, my translation; also Pesle, 1946:245). By contrast, ear-piercing and circumcision are both common practices in Muslim societies; the latter has been supported by the sunnah, the tradition of the Prophet.

[10] Rubbing with saffron is not a tradition that I encountered in the Moroccan ethnography, or in the field. It is reported by Kanafani that Muhammad encouraged men to rub their bodies with saffron (Kanafani, 1984:51).

[11] And conversely, smell causes individuals to recall these experiences. During my fieldwork, several men said that they could not bear the smell of henna, which reminded them of the pain of their circumcision. As one commentary on the meaning of smell contends, "The perception of smell, thus, consists not only of the sensation of the odours themselves, but of the experiences and emotions associated with them" (Classen, Howes, and Synnott, 1994:2).

[12] A similar rejection of a stable signifier-meaning relationship in Nuba body decoration is the position stated in a book-length study of this art form:

> Indeed, a search for minimally meaningful units more fundamental than the representational design forms themselves in a graphic system such as the Southeastern Nuba is ... fruitless — like searching for the 'meanings' of phonemes, as it were. (Faris, 1972:99)

[13] A detailed study of tattoos and other forms of body modification contends that tattoos, piercings, and cicatrizations are not strictly permanent, as their appearance changes over time. Nonetheless, they leave a lasting mark on the body. (Rubin, 1988:13)

[14] Here I use the language of scholars of hadith. A chain of transmission (*isnad*) in which all transmitters are valid (independent biographical data establishes that they were physically in contact with each other) and reliable (their character and accuracy are demonstrated to be without reproach) establishes the authenticity of an action or dialogue attributed to the Prophet.

[15] I suspect that this was intended humorously, since the needles do not puncture (and in fact, barely even touch) the skin.

[16] The carnival "embraces lowness. Degradation, debasement, the body and all its functions — but particularly defecation, urination, and copulation — are part and parcel of the ambivalent carnival experience. The body, then, is part of this ambivalence. It is not closed in and private, but open to the world." (Lechte, 1994:9)

[17] The movement of ritual specialists from the traditional sector to the more profitable tourism sector has been investigated by Bob Simpson, in his study of drum makers in southern Sri Lanka (Simpson, 1993). Although such production did not constitute their economic mainstay, some

families engaged in occasional mask production for other performers, who are invariably kin. The growth of tourism in southern Sri Lanka, and the emergence of the ritual dance as a focal point, borrowed the motifs of the "devil dance" to represent Sri Lankan culture generally. Some residents began to produce the masks used in ritual dance for sale to tourists; liberated from the detail required for use in ritual contexts, producers introduced new sizes, forms, and materials. Mask images appeared on key chains, batiks, and vases. As the family producing for tourists concentrated on this market, they withdrew from traditional activities in the local community, including participation in healing rituals, weakening social relationships and resulting in the isolation of the tourist producers.

[18] The knowledge of a focal vocabulary related to henna designs is also documented by Korolnik-Andersch and Korolnik, 2002, in the context of motifs painted (with henna) on cloaks in a south Moroccan village.

[19] See Marcus and Fischer, 1986. This critique suggests a fruitful, if shaming, parallel with tourism. Graburn elegantly writes of tourist collecting in the context of colonial Canada as attempts to "build an 'ethnic' identity separate from the homeland by taking the cultural space of the conquered peoples" (Graburn, 1999:346).

[20] The acquisition by tourists of locally-produced commodities that have been branded with spiritual meaning is interesting to me, as it underlines the meaning of consumption in Western society. Buying something means having its characteristics. Nelson Graburn has commented on a similar interest among tourists in Arctic carvings, noting that the southern art market has focused on casting these objects as a "newly discovered but ancient Inuit art form [that] was formerly part of ritual life and revealed the spiritual nature of their animist world" (Graburn, 1999:336).

[21] Self-conscious differentiation (particularly in terms of social identity and status) through fashion is most apparent in industrialized societies, but not limited to them. See Cannon, 1998, for a discussion of fashion that emphasizes its role in social comparison and locates it within non-Western as well as Western societies. Andrea Molnar has documented the increasing social value of traditional textiles in Ngada (Indonesia), as women from higher income groups (wives of government officials) have begun to purchase Western-style clothing created in the female cottage industry from locally woven textiles. The association of these textiles with the higher social status of those who can afford to purchase them has given new allure to traditional textiles (Molnar, 1998). The "fashionable" use of henna by domestic Moroccan tourists is situated in this context of identification and differentiation.

[22] The acclaimed Tunisian coming-of-age film *Halfaouine (Enfant des Terraces)* relies on this motif as a central plot point: when neighborhood boys realize that the protagonist is still attending the female baths, they beg him to observe and describe the bodies of the women bathers.

[23] Of course, police are not the only ones to present themselves as arbiters. Educated by tour guides, travel books, and anthropological accounts, well-traveled tourists are "experts in authenticity" (Oakes, 1998:2).

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Appendix: Glossary of specialized terms

'arabiyya:	"Arabic," i.e. Modern Standard or Classical Arabic
adab	manners
Amazigh:	indigenous inhabitants of North Africa, often called Berbers
arba'iin	forty-day ceremony in which a bride visits her natal family for the first time after her wedding
daarij:	Moroccan dialect
dirham	Moroccan unit of currency, equivalent to about 7 cents Canadian (2004)
fqih	religious scholar or male ritual specialist
fusha	Classical Arabic
gazelle	female tourist
ghazala	beautiful
ghmata	ritual involving wrapping and applying substances including henna to newborn child
haik	cloak worn by Moroccan women
hammam	public bath
harqus	blackish cosmetic applied in tattoo-like designs to face
hinna	henna, esp. the plant Lawsonia inermis
hinnaya	henna artisan
jellaba	hooded loose over-garment worn by men and women
jnun	friendly and unfriendly supernatural beings
khamsa, khmisa	more or less stylized hand icon, literally "five" and "little five" respectively
lugha diyalna	literally "our language," i.e. Moroccan Arabic
naqsh	designs created from henna paste
ngab	face veil worn in Morocco
nhar l-hinna	principal henna ceremony associated with marriage
nqiish	designs created from henna paste (diminutive form)
nqqaasha	henna artisan
riyal	folk currency, representing .05 dirhams (5 centimes)
sabon bildii	soft dark soap made from ash and olive oil
shorfa	descent group considered to be descendents of the family of the Prophet; sing. Shariif or Shariifa
sunnah	custom of the Prophet; in Turkey and south-east Asia, circumcision
swak	oak bark used to clean the teeth and to dye the lips and gums
tahara	circumcision; literally, purification
tifinagh	Tamazight (Berber language) alphabet
zagharit	wordless vocalization produced by women at joyous occasions; sometimes onomatopoeically called "you-you"